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THE PICTURE ON THE STAIRCASE

A Hallowe'en Adventure in Virginia

By HARRIET CONWAY BRIGHAM, *with Drawings by* HARRISON FISHER

WE WERE a party of five girls who unexpectedly found ourselves the inmates of one of those old Virginia manor houses, far antedating the Revolution, about which there is always an air of romantic mystery which is specially dear to all feminine hearts.

Rose Dabney, Mary and Agnes Preston and I, Margaret Graham, had been the guests of our cousin, Alice Blair, living in Fairfax. As our homes were in adjoining counties, about forty miles apart, we proposed driving to the Preston plantation in Montgomery, while Rose and Alice accompanied me to my home in Loudon County, to remain until the New Year. We intended stopping over-night at the Preston's to rest the horses, as heavy rains had made the regular stage route almost impassable.

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It was the last day of October, and the short autumn twilight suddenly faded into darkness before we had completed two-thirds of the distance. A cold wind came up, sweeping masses of black clouds across the sky, until we had to strain our eyes to see objects by the roadside. I looked at my watch. It was twenty minutes past five o'clock. The carriage was at the top of a hill. Uncle Ezra reined in his horses and jumped down from the box.

"'Tain't no use er goin' on, Miss Alice," he said. "Dy'ahs somep'n in de road."

"But, Uncle Ezra!" I exclaimed, "we must go on; we can't stay here all night."

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"Dat's so, Miss Marg'et," he answered, "an' I jest studdin' de bes' way outen dis hyah mess; we ken go back half er mile an' den turn to de lef' an' teck de road leadin' tuh Cunnel Wesley's. He ain't dyah, en I reckon de help 'll bode all we fo' de night. Hit's begin toh rain already."

"What do you say to that, girls?" But even as I questioned, Uncle Ezra began to turn the carriage cautiously around. When we reached the branch road, the horses found new difficulties, as they plunged down gulleys and over rocks, jolting us about frightfully.

"What a road!" Agnes gasped. "Does anything human live at the end of it?"

"Oh, don't you know?" explained Alice. "The Wesleys, uncle and two nephews, are always abroad. A few old family servants keep the place. Colonel Wesley hasn't been home since his sister disappeared, years and years ago. He seems to shun this place."

"What's that?" cried all, as the carriage gave a terrific lunge, precipitating Mary Preston over into my lap.

"We'se hit de gatepos', Miss Alice, en Dick's fell down," roared Ezra. "Help, dyah, some o' yo' niggers! Help!"

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Through the window I saw the bobbing lights of several lanterns. We were soon extricated, only to find ourselves ankle-deep in mud, and a dreary rain falling. Three negroes were helping Uncle Ezra, and a fourth, holding a lantern, motioned us to follow him to the house.

Our conductor was a tall, broad-shouldered fellow, who kept a steady pace in front of us, swinging the light about so that we could see the pebbled walk winding up to a dark building which loomed against the sky, grim and massive. Our guide ran up the steps, lifted the heavy knocker, turned, and disappeared in the darkness.

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As I stopped to clean my shoes of mud, I felt that he was watching me, and, with an indescribable sensation, I sprang across the porch, just as the door opened, disclosing a vast dimness bounded by time-stained walls. On one side was a cavernous fireplace, and, upon the brick hearth, a dwarfish darkey was piling lightwood, which had been kindled and was smoking dismally. Her great eyes and shining teeth gleamed impishly at me through the clouds of smoke.

"Who opened the door?" I asked her.

FIVE PAIRS OF SHOES WERE SOON DRYING BEFORE THE FIREPLACE

"Dunno, missy," she answered hoarsely. "Spec' hit op'n hitself; it sometime do."

I shivered. "What is the matter with this place, girls?"

"Damp and musty," suggested Agnes, "and dreadfully smoky."

"But this is certainly much better than remaining out all night!" Rose ventured.

We all chorused "Yes, indeed!" and began to remove our wet wraps. Five pairs of shoes were soon drying before the fire, and ten black-stockinged feet were warming in various graceful attitudes. We sat upon old cushions, brought us by the child, whom I dubbed "Thing."

"Thing, are you flesh and blood?" I demanded suddenly, as I detected her black eyes staring at me.

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"Reckon I'se skin en bones. Rach say that, Missy."

"Who is Rach?" I inquired, shaking out my hair to dry.

"Dunno; she lives hyah, sence de wo'ld done been made. She mighty old; en lawd! done she know er heap! My! Ef dat Rach done fin' yo' all hyah, she sutney know jes' w'at gwine hap'n all yo'," pointing a tiny black forefinger at each of us in turn.

We laughed disdainfully; and Rose, pushing out a pretty foot toward the little imp, said coaxingly: "Go away, Midget, and get us something to eat."

"My name Mari," ejaculated the child, rolling her big eyes solemnly, as she began slowly backing toward a curtained archway, behind which she finally vanished.

We began to look about us. The hall was probably twenty feet wide and forty feet long; the walls were paneled in dark oak to the height of seven feet, which left a space of yellow-painted plaster, about five feet in depth, above the wide ledge which capped the wainscoting. This space was nearly concealed by the many portraits on the wall.

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Those sombre eyes followed us about in the most grewsome manner. Over the high mantel there was a more modern painting, a beautiful, youthful woman with two dark-haired boys, one on either side of the low couch upon which she reclined. It was a splendid bit of color, with many strong lines to distinguish it from the stiff, uncomely effigies of departed Wesleys which were near-by.

The massive staircase stretched up into darkness, the long ascent being twice broken by a broad landing. Three steps led to the first landing; and there, hanging low upon the paneling, was another portrait. It was the full-length figure of a young girl, her white draperies seeming to wave in the firelight, the pointed toe of her white satin slipper advanced as if she were about to descend. The long, delicately rounded arms and throat gleamed like smooth, firm flesh, while the lovely bosom almost stirred five red roses lying there. The pose of the head, with its crown of pale brown hair, was beautiful; but the eyes were holes in the canvas. I started, but could not look away from those ghastly holes.

"Who could have mutilated that sweetly beautiful face, I wonder?"

Agnes laughed. "We can ask Mari, for here she is."

The child carried a bowl of preserved pears in her claw-like hands. A wrinkled, hobbling old mammy followed with a pot of fragrant tea. A man, evidently the butler, brought a small folding table and spread it with a fine damask cloth, yellow with age and smelling of cedar. We had now put on our shoes and made a limited but improving change of toilettes.

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Agnes, always cold, borrowed her sister's wrap from our common shawl strap; Mary discarded her unbecoming jacket, and, after vigorously shaking her crumpled drapery, settled down placidly beside the fire. Rose and Alice exchanged neck-ribbons and readjusted a few hairpins in each other's smooth braids; while I, who suffered most in the collision, was kindly assisted by each girl.

One picked off particles of mud clinging to my skirt; another pinned up gathers; Mary loaned me a handkerchief, for my bag was hopelessly missing; and Rose brushed out my hair, declaring that as it was similar in color to the girl's in the portrait, "it would be lovely to arrange it like hers," she said.

I objected; but Rose was irresistible, and forced me to stand beside the picture while she held a strand of my hair against the painted head. It was like, and I was as tall, and quite as slender as the unhappy girl; for, with my face near hers, smiling and innocent though it was, I divined something of the truth, but foolishly allowed Rose to have her way until my hair was wound into an exact copy of the portrait's.

THE FRONT DOOR SUDDENLY BLEW OPEN, AND THE CLOCK STRUCK TWELVE!

"It is quite as pretty as the dead girl's," she said smilingly, as she looked at it.

"Why do you say dead girl?" we exclaimed. But an unexpected answer came from the portrait. It was a deep, deep sigh.

The blood rushing to my heart, I tried to pull down my hair, but Rose prevented.

Mari and the butler again appeared, one carrying a platter of fried chicken, and the other a tray filled with odd, handleless cups, plates and saucers of different patterns, spoons and forks of quaint designs, and knives so thin that they bent with the slightest pressure. The old woman brought hot corn pone and a pat of fresh butter.

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After we had taken our seats, the man once more went away, but returned immediately with a vase containing five red roses.

Roses on November eve, sixty miles from a florist's, and—just like those on that girl's bosom!

No one spoke, and my hands shook so that the old woman touched my arm, whispering:

"Drink some wine, honey; wahm you, aftah the wet." She was far from being a typical mammy, with her wan, yellow face and bony figure, but somehow I liked her.

"Are you Aunt Rachel?" I asked.

She started. "Laws no, honey, I isn't; who done tole yo' 'bout huh?"

I indicated Mari.

"She tole yo'? Dat's sutney cur'ous. No, honey; my name Aunt Betty."

When we had finished our supper, the butler removed all except the chairs, which had been taken from the dining-room.

They were heavy, stiff-backed mahogany affairs, designed for the erect spinal columns of two generations ago. With our modern notions of lounging, it was impossible to sit comfortably in them; so we slipped to the floor and disposed ourselves, after the manner of girls, about the hearth.

A clock, somewhere, chimed the hour of ten, and as yet we had no intimation from our black hosts that beds were to be thought of.

Aunt Betty and Mari still remained, listening to our gay conversation. "Yo' is all mighty light o' heart, misses. Spec' de sperits walk tuh-night, sho' 'nough"—at which dark hint Mary Preston shuddered.

But the old wine was like fire in my veins, and so exhilarated me that forebodings of ill vanished, leaving me eager for any kind of excitement.

I saucily asked the old crone if she hadn't a charm against spirits; and, although her sad expression changed instantly to anger, I laughed easily in her face. The worn fingers of her right hand clutched her side as she made several peculiar motions in the air with the other. At this, the child whimpered, but was silenced by one look from her offended grandam.

Our curiosity aroused, it required some coaxing to have her consent to try our fortunes.

"Fust, set down, chillun," she commanded in a deeper tone than her cracked treble seemed to warrant, and we all obediently drew near, watching her preparations with amused interest.

"I mus' smoke, o' co'se, chillun," and taking a short black pipe and tobacco-bag from her pocket, she filled her pipe, after rubbing a large leaf of dried tobacco in her hands. As she pressed this mass into the bowl, Mari held out a charred splinter of wood with one glowing end. Aunt Betty accepted the attention with a nod and grumbled "G'long," at which the child shrunk behind the mantelpiece, where I could occasionally see her enormous eyes peeping around at me. My face seemed to have a real fascination for her.

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Aunt Betty smoked silently for some minutes, and, humoring her mood, I did not interrupt until she removed the pipe from her lips for a moment.

"Whose fortune will you tell first?" I hastened to ask.

"You's, honey." Dropping on my knees before her and holding out both hands, palms upward, while she deliberately scanned them, I became conscious of a new presence, and, turning toward the darker end of the hall, I saw a gigantic negress intently and malignantly regarding me.

Before I could move, her expression changed to one of frenzied grief. If it had not been for Aunt Betty, I would have fainted as the gaunt figure of "Rach" (Mari's scream told me who it was) fell prostrate at my feet. She began to crawl toward me, her body rocking convulsively, her horny hands clasped over her unturbaned head in an agony too dreadful to describe. Looking searchingly into my face, she implored:

"Is yo' Miss Mabel, done come back aftah all dese hyah years, twelve dis blessed night? Is yo' my los' baby dat I he'p run 'way wid dat villain, 'cause yo' loved him? Yo' never son' fo' you mammy like yo' done p'omise. Oh, Miss Mabel, honey, yo'se done broke every heart dat loved yo'." In the silence which followed, a smothered voice cried, "Mabel!" It came from the portrait, and, paralyzed with fear, I gazed at those awful eyes until my brain reeled. Some one touched my hand, and I knew that it was Mari trying to lead me away.

•

Horror of horrors, she was taking me upstairs past that girl! I felt powerless to resist, and dared not look back. Up, up we went; on the second landing a door was ajar, but Mari hurried me down the hall into a lighted room.

Half stupefied, I noted the faded decorations of the ceiling—a fresco of cherubs dropping roses over the walls, and even the soft, fawn-colored carpet had its share of the pale rosebuds. Dusty lace curtains were at the wide, high windows, and between these hung a mirror in a tarnished gilt frame. There was a muslin-draped toilet table with yellowing ivory combs and brushes scattered on its dingy cover.

I found myself lying back in a cushioned chair, for, right opposite, the mirror reflected my slight figure. I could not stir, for I seemed a part of the phantom place. Mari had disappeared. When she came back she had a long trailing robe of white satin, with filmy lace draperies. She must have undressed me; I do not know how her tiny fingers accomplished it, but after a time she made me stand up and pinned five red roses on my breast.

•

Then I realized, as in a dream, that I had on the dress that had been Mabel Wesley's. Even the white silk stockings and the dainty slippers, which pinched a little, she had managed to put on me. Then she took my hand and led me out of the room. I recall the sensation of a cool draught of air on my bare arms and neck as I slowly descended the stairs, and, as I reached the last step, my foot advanced, the front door suddenly blew open, and the clock struck twelve!

Then I saw, oh, how distinctly! a tall, dark-bearded man standing on the threshold, with two younger men, looking at me as if they could scarcely endure the sight.

My brain cleared in an instant. My one thought was flight, and, turning, I tripped in my heavy train and fell with full force against the portrait. It gave way, and I was precipitated down a short flight of stairs into a closet. When consciousness returned I was lying on the bed in Mabel's room. I knew that Rose was bathing my face and that one of my arms was bandaged. The pain was intense, but my sense of shame was even more acute.

I kept my eyes closed while I felt a man's cool hands about my head, which was cut above the left temple. Rose had gone to the dressing-table at the command of this unknown surgeon, who pushed back my loosened hair. It must have clung about his fingers, for I felt it pulled slightly, and I heard him breathe quickly. The thought that, because of an unfortunate resemblance, I was a source of unhappiness to some one was absolutely unbearable to me.

•

I was sane enough, now, to accuse myself bitterly for allowing the child to disguise me in that poor girl's clothes. Who would believe that I had not been fully conscious of the change of dress? I could endure it no longer. So dear Rose and Agnes, watching beside me in the night, were alarmed to hear my wild sobs, when the household, at two o'clock, was just seeking rest. Mary and Alice, occupying a small room adjoining mine, came to assure me that the affair was not "nearly so dreadful" as I fancied.

Alice had heard all the pitiful story of the portrait from Edward Wesley, the younger nephew. It could be told in very few words; but I should not hear it that night. I begged, however, to know one thing—how they had happened to come back.

Mary compassionately answered: "They had been home a week, after nearly ten years' absence. They had intended leaving Virginia after their effects had been packed and the plantation sold, and they wished to avoid their old neighbors.

"Now, Margaret Graham, go to sleep," Alice commanded; and I must have obeyed her, for it was morning when I awoke.

The Prestons were to leave for home in an hour, while Alice and Rose were to remain. One of the Wesley servants had gone for a surgeon, and I was assured "that everything was being done for my comfort."

Until late in the evening, when Doctor Mills came, I saw only the girls. He said that I was to keep my bed at least four days, as the shock to my nervous system was considerable, and added that it was unnecessary for him "to come again, if the person who bandaged my arm and head could be depended upon." He lived fifteen miles

away, he said, and was often compelled to be absent from home for days together.

When he went, taking with him that pungent odor of "horse," which clings to the habiliments of the country doctor, my memory cruelly recalled a faint, agreeable essence which had been exhaled from hands very unlike those of Doctor Mills.

When I saw Rose that night, I entreated her to tell me everything. "Did I quite spoil the portrait?"

She laughed softly. "Quite, my dear; and this morning Colonel Wesley cut it out of the oak frame, which is really a doorway. Your head struck the poor girl on the heart, and the decaying canvas was torn down to the toe of that coquettish slipper. When the Colonel followed you, the canvas was rent upward and flapped on either side of the door frame. You see, Colonel Wesley had been in that closet, known only to his family, and had left the door open for light. A smaller door, at the foot of the steps down which you fell, opens into the gun-room.

*

"The portrait was made to fit exactly into the doorway on the front staircase, and was placed there, originally, to hide a defect in the paneling. His father, Judge Wesley, afterward conceived the plan of cutting a door and making this closet a place for storing valuables during the war. The night that Mabel, the Colonel's twin sister, left home with a worthless fellow who had been forbidden the house, the eyes of the portrait were found mutilated. It was probably done by her lover, whom she had secreted in the closet. Randolph Wesley, the father of these young men, was then living. His wife, whose portrait hangs over the mantelpiece, had just died; and the elopement of Mabel was a terrible blow. No trace of her has ever been found, but Colonel Wesley believes that she is still living."

"Is that all?" I meekly inquired, with a feeling of intense disappointment.

"It is a rather commonplace story," Rose admitted; "but you surely wish to know how it affects you, Margaret? It was the Colonel who conducted us to this house last night. He had on his hunting suit, as he had just returned from a hard ride across country. He was in the stable when he heard Uncle Ezra's cry for help. You remember how

"WILL YOU NOT BRING IT PEACE, MARGARET?"

careful our guide was not to let the light shine on his face or hands. Edward Wesley, who cleared up all these minor mysteries, told me that his uncle was anxious for our comfort, and to his careful ordering we owe the delicacies of our supper, roses and all.

"They intended to start again before dawn; and, as we indicated no desire to vacate the hall, it was necessary to get the supply of powder and shot from the closet. The sounds we heard came from their cautious movements behind the portrait, and, just as you passed them on the stairs, with that queer little Mari, he saw the shadow of your head upon the painted one. He was so excited with the presentiment that Mabel was near that it was difficult to control him. In spite of her disgrace, this brother has always revered her memory; and hearing Rachel's awful grief, he could not longer remain unknown to us. How they happened to appear at the moment you came down dressed like Mabel, I forgot to inquire.

"When he carried you upstairs your hair had fallen across his arms, and stains of blood were on his shirt where your head had lain. He was completely unnerved after he put you on Mabel's bed, and I saw his lips whiten as he glanced around at her familiar belongings. Then he turned to you, and, with admirable control, bandaged your wounds with the skill of an experienced surgeon."

*

I must have fallen into a leaden stupor after Rose's long recital, because I awoke late at night, calling out that "my blood was covering Colonel Wesley."

There was a dreadful pain in my arm, and my head was throbbing with fever. I realized that dear Mammy was bending over me, and I begged them not to call him; but while I spoke the words, Colonel Wesley knocked at my door to inquire about me.

I was in danger of becoming really ill on account of my enforced presence in his house, but by the fourth day I had sufficiently collected myself to send for father, who was in New York. Two days later he arrived, and found me able to sit up in an easy-chair. When I had told him the whole foolish and humiliating story, he offered to make all the apologies and explanations consistent with good taste to Colonel Wesley, whom he was to meet in the library that afternoon.

*

To my great relief, our family physician, Doctor Fitzpatrick, a cousin of my mother's, came before sundown, and won my eternal gratitude by declaring that the journey home might be attempted within the week.

The girls accompanied my father to our home on the next day but one, while Mammy and Cousin William remained to care for me.

I wondered what had become of Mari; but to my frequent inquiries I received no definite information until the evening before I left. Aunt Betty, who brought my luncheon-tray, told me "How dat chile done degraceded herse'f sho'."

Aunt Betty looked at me and shook her head dubiously. "Marster tink he mighty pow'ful, but he ain' see dat he min' done git heap lighter, 'cause he done foun' some'n like de los' Miss Mabel." I was wicked enough to tease her. "But I am going away to-morrow morning and will never come back again!" Aunt Betty sniffed. "Yo' reckon yo' is, Miss Mar'get; but yo' dunn know Marse Paul!" After which remark I reflected unutterable thoughts over my teacup.

*

That evening, about an hour after dinner, I was sitting alone in the flickering light, the logs having burned low, when I felt a slight draught on my back. Turning quickly, I saw Colonel Wesley. He was awfully pale, while I turned scarlet under the steady gaze of his eyes. He walked to the mantel—having the grace not to look toward me—and said, speaking into the dying fire: "Miss Graham, a series of fatalities have attended your presence in this house. It has been a cursed place to me for many years."

A spasm of memory distorted his face, and, before I had comprehended his meaning, he leaned over me, breathing quickly.

"I wanted to sell the plantation and so rid myself of the past," he went on, "but I believe that it will have a different fate. One woman brought it shame and sorrow—will you not bring it peace, Margaret?"

THE BOATSWAIN'S YARN . . . *When the Diver Rode the Turtle*

By H. PHELPS WHITMARSH

With a Picture by JESSIE A. WALKER

IT WAS half-past six. Tea, a meal that almost invariably consisted of dry hash, cabin bread and marmalade, was just over, and I had stepped out on the quarter-deck to see the sun go down. Forward, I could hear a man singing. I listened and in a little while there came, from a score of lusty throats, the cheering chorus:

"And awa-ay you Rio,
'Way you Ri-o,
Then fare you well,
My bonny young girl,
We're bound for the Rio Grande."

The melody of this stirring, deep-sea chantey sounds wondrous sweet to the untrained ear of a sailor-man. I felt lonely, and it being my watch below, I went forward to the forecastle head, where the hands were whiling away the dog-watch to the accompaniment of the cook's accordion.

*

The day had been excessively hot, for we were within three degrees of the "line," and the wind had been straight up and down for twenty awful hours. Sundown brought us a little breeze out of the northwest, enough to keep the sails from flapping, and the Bully Boy was wrinkling the flat sea with her broad bow at the astonishing rate of three knots an hour. But anything in the shape of wind was a godsend after such a day, and, besides, of what earthly use is a "windjammer" without some wind?

On the forecastle head I found the men strung out under the cool draught of the foresail, and squatting down beside Mac, the boatswain, I joined the chantey chorus. Later, an ordinary seaman, who rejoiced in the name of Job and a tuneless, squeaky voice, stood up against the capstan and wailed, Wite Till the Clouds Roll Boi, Jinny. In the middle of the second verse, a voice from abaft cried "Belay there!" and Job shut up like a jackknife with the spring badly broken.

The silence which followed was disturbed by the blowing of a whale, almost alongside, and looking in the direction of the sound, we saw plainly the huge bulk of the leviathan ploughing through the water in a halo of brilliant phosphorescence.

*

"That was a big fellow," I remarked.

"Bedad," said Mac, "an' if ut's big the blubber-tank looks to ye from this pint, sorr, fwhat wud ye think if ye rubbed snoots wid the like av him undher a hundred fost av wather, through the magnification av a face glass, sorr?"

"I must admit, Mac," I replied, "that I have no desire to see one under such circumstances. I suppose you have met them when you were diving?"

"Indade I have, sorr," said Mac, "many a wan av thim, but more power to the man that invinted the bastes, they're as harumless as the frogs in the bog of Auchnacloy, an' I'd sooner be inthroduced to a say full av thim same Jonah swallowers than mate wan little illawarra."

The "crowd," scenting a yarn in the wind, shuffled nearer the boatswain, and there was a great sucking of their pipes.

"What is an illawarra, Mac?" I ventured.

"It's jist a wee bit av a fish, sorr," he answered, "no longer than the lingth av me finger, an' not half the thick av ut; but the whole carciss av the dhirty little beggar is that chock full av viperious pizon that wan bite will swell the arrum av a man to the size av a harness cask in the twinklin' av an eye—that it will."

"Der harness cask vas pooty beeg, ain'd it?" said a Dutchman, named Johnson.

*

"Av coorse ut's big, ye squarehead," replied the boatswain indignantly. "That's the way wid these ignoramuses, sorr," he said to me; "ye tell thim Gospel truth, an' they think yer lyin'; an' ye spin thim the greatest yarrn yer imaginathory powers can decoct, an' they swally ut as aisy as a mout'ful of butther."

"Never mind him, Mac," said I. "I am interested in this strange fish that I never heard of before. Tell us more about it."

The old diver struck a match on the sole of his boot, and drew the flame slowly into the bowl of his black clay pipe. "Well," he began, "it was through wan av thim same illawarras that I got into wan av the quarest expayriences that iver happened to mortal man. It was the time av the big find av pearl shell at the Lacipedes, an' ivery mother's son av a diver that had a tub undher him was there, working spring tides, an' neap tides, week-days an' Sundays.

"The shells was thick an' pearls plintiful, an' but for me bein' tuk with the paralysis, ut's ridin' in me chaise I'd be this day, instid av larnin' dundher-headed Dutchmen the thrue pronouncemint av the Quane's English. The shells was plinty, an' the turtles was thick as the hair on a Kerry cow.

*

"Wan day whin I was prontenadin' over the bottom as aisy as ye plaze, wid a slack tide, an' me bag nigh full, fwhat do I see forninst me but the most monstrous pearl shell I iver clapped eyes on. 'There's stones in that,' sez I to mesilf, 'or I'm a naygur,' an' wid that I stoops to pick ut up. Me han' was widin a fut av ut, whin all to wanst out jumps the wickedest little illawarra—an' the same is naythur afeard av fish nor man—an' the next minut I was turnin' handsprings under a hundred an' twinty fut av wather, wid a pain that run up wan side av me an' down the other.

"Niver shall I disremimber the paralyzin' pain av that bite. I jumped an' howled, an' run, an' swented, an' lost me bag av shell—me han' in the manetime gradjooally assoomin' the size an' appayrince av a biled ham. Moanin' an' groanin', an' hangin' on to me bit finger wid the other han', I immayjutly comminced to thravel over the bottom av the say at the rate av knots—ravin' mad wid the tormint av that pizoned bite."

Here Johnson put in his oar, crying in an excited way, "Griets Himmel, Mac! Vy don't you der shaps on dop pull you oop haf? Vy don'd you?"

"Hear him!" said Mac, in a tone of impatient disgust. "Hear the curse av the English marchant sarvice, thryin' to tache his betthers how to act! Don't ye know, ye skulkin' pan-tile ater, that to come up widin an hour afther the bite av an illawarra manes sartin' death?

"Ye see, sorr," he continued, turning to me, "by keepin' undher wather the pressure foorces the bitten part to bleed greatly; an' by the same manes the viperious pizon is entoirely dhruv out av the systim."

*

"I understand," I answered; "go on."

"Well, as soon as me first scare was over, I signals to me tendher to hyst the mudhook an' let the boat drift, for sez I to mesilf, 'Mac,' sez I, "'tis the length av a dog-watch ye'll have to spind wid these onhealthy subjects av ould Neptune, anyhow, an' ye may jist as well be reviewin' the lay av the land as to be shtandin' in wan shpot, wishin' the time wud pass, an' inveigleing agin illawarras in four languages.' An' so I shtarted an' walked, an' walked till I thought the legs wud dhrop aff av me; an' the pain be degrees got beautifully less, an' all I was houldin' on for was the swellin' to go down sufficiently.

"I'd been below the biggest part av two hours fwhin I see, feedin' quiet an' nisy like on a patch av say grass over beyant, an amazin' big turtle. Through the face glass ut looked the size av a cow. Whether ut was bekase av me bein' kind av light-headed, or for the want av divarsion, I don't know, but I fell to thinkin' how I cud catch him.

"'Mac,' sez I, 'here's six hundred pounds av frish mate undher yer nose, and a boat full av min eighteen fathoms above dyin' av scurvy for the want av ut.' Wid that I creeps cautiously afther him. The shtern av the baste was toward me, an' I see that he was an ould customer by raison av the size av the barnacles on his back. In me right sinses I knew he was too big, but the shmell av turtle shteaks was in me mind, an' me mad was shtill up at the thought av the illawarra. 'I'll have him,' sez I, 'if ut takes me from now till alver.'"

*

"Did you have a knife or a club of any description with you, Mac?" I asked.

"Nary a thing did I have, but the two bare hands av me, an' wan av thim was a wreck. But mind ye, I'm knownst to the build av a turtle; an' in about the lingth av time it wud tak ye to say 'knife' I had me modis operandium arranged. Thinks I, "'Tis only the bake av the baste that there's any call to be afeard av, an' I can aisy kape clear av that. As for takin' him up, sure all I'll have to do is to catch a hould av him by the edges av his shell an' lift him agin me chist, at the same time pintin' his nose towards the boat so as to shteer him. Thin I'll signal to pull up, an' betune the bhoys haulin' an' Misther Turtle's flippin' we'll be at the top in mighty short ordher.'

"This was the plans I was makin', as I shtepped dainty like across the bottom towards me vinerable quarry. Fwhin I was widin six fut av him, whither ut was the bubbles from me escape valve or the delicate thread av me thirty-two pounders that skeered him, I dunno, but all to wanst I see his head shoot up, an' down I dhrapped behind a coral cup, me heart thumpin' like the ingines av a stameboat for fear I'd lost

me chanst. Houldin' me breath, I kep' as shtill as a shtone image, an' in a minut or two he wint on atein' agin.

"'Now's your time, Mac,' I sez, and wid that I made wan lep and threw mesilf wid open arrums on the broad back av the shell scoffer. 'Ah! ye ould swab,' I sez, grippin' him tight, 'kim up an' be cooked.' But he seemed to regyard me frindly offer wid scorn, an' the nixt thing I knew the ould side-wheeler was undher way, an' me feet was aff the bottom, an the both av us flukin' through the grane wather at the shpinnin' rate av sivinty knots an hour."

"How you know you vas go so queek—you heaf der log, eh?" said Johnson sarcastically.

"By the same raison that I know yer a Dutchman," answered Mac quickly. "'Tis me own expayrience taches me.

•

"Howly shmokes!" he continued, "how we thraveled! In less than no time the bottom was out av sight, an' ould Hard Shell shtruck a coorse betwixt and betune, me hangin' on like the tail av a kite. A jerk that nearly siparated us tould me that we'd rached the ind av the lifeline. Thin things wint steadier, for betune us we was towin' the boat. The backlash av the flippers was tremenjous, but we moved slower, an' ut give me time to consider. 'Faith, Mac,' I sez, 'this shtrain on yer arrums is killin'—ye must do somthin' or dhrap.' An' mind ye, there was full fifty fut to fall, an' a rock bottom. Wan slew av me fiery steed wud ha' sint me wid fling summersaults to a watery tomb.

"'Whoa!' I sez to him, thryin' me level best to haul him closer. 'Come in, ye swab!' I shouts, but nary a come wud he come. Thin I got mad; an' be tuggin', an' shtrainin', an' jerkin', an' scramblin', I got first wan leg an' thin the other over the fore side av ould Barnacle's flippers.

"'Now, me fine felly,' sez I, houldin' on tight wid me knees, 'thravel!' An' we thraveled you can jist bet.

"There I was, shootin' through the wather for all the worruld like a man on a flyin' bicycle racin' agin the record. All this while me tendher, thinkin' av coorse that a shark was chewin' the leg aff av me, was signalin' like mad, axin' if he'd pull me up, an' ivery time I'd shake out 'No!' on the lifeline by knockin' me helmet hard gin ut.

"On sailed Ould Pegaysus at the top av his shpin, me hangin' on to him like death, wondherin' fwhat in blazes wud I do next. Thin av a suddin I sez, 'Mac, ye omadhaun, fwhy don't ye shteer him?' An' wid that I throws me weight on the back part av him, an' gradjooally elevates his head till we was pintin' shtraight to the top. Immayjutly the shtrain av towin' the boat was aff him, he makes wan lightnin' swoop upwards, an' the next minut the pair av us shoots twinty fut into the air and down he comes wid a splot.

•

"An' thin began the shport. Fwhat wid him cuttin' onairthly didos to get below, an' me thryin' to kape him up, there was the greatest shkippin' match ye iver see. Man, man, how he did jump, an' buck, an' dive; ye'd think he was a two-year-ould shtraddled for the first time. Up an' down we bobbed, first wan way an' thin the other.

"'Will ye niver shtop?' I sez, shakin' him, an' forgittin' that he cudn't hear me inside the helmet. 'Begobs, thin, but I think I can make ye,' sez I, beginnin' to onlash me chist weight. Wid wan han' I cast aff the waist lashin', an' thin I slips the lanyard over me head. 'Now, Lord Shrugullion,' I sez, swingin' me thirty-pound liver pad, 'shtop, or I'll brain ye!' But nary a worrud did he answer, so widout further parley vous I welted him, whack-oh! The wan bang was enough. He slowed up to wanst, an' tuk to trimblin' like a man wid the chills.

"'Now, Mac,' I sez, 'it's your turn'; an' before he cud recover himself I had two half hitches aroun' his neck wid the lifeline, an' had signaled to the bhoys to haul away.

"In tin seconds more we was alongside, an' wid the aid av a bowline the pair av us was hysted on deck, amid the cheerin' an' wavin av the entire fleet."

•

Ting-ling, ting-ling, ting-ling, ting-ling, rang the little bell on the poop.

"Eight bells!" chants a voice from abaft.

"Eight bells!" answers the lookout, striking the hour upon the big bell for'ard.

"Bos'en," said the mate, "let the hands take a pull on the weather braces."

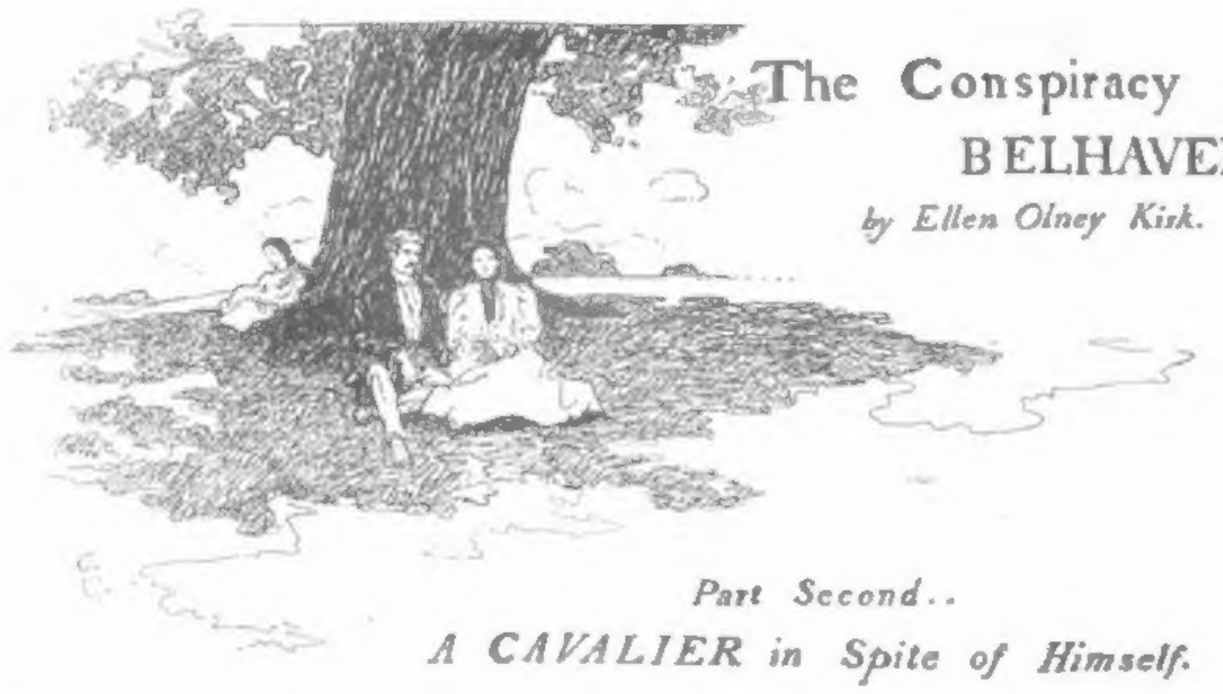
"Aye, aye, sir!" said Mac. "Starboard main braces, boys!"

As we trooped aft, I said, "Is that a true story, Mac?"

"Ivery worrud av ut, sorr," he replied.

Johnson muttered, "I don'd peleaf it."

"ON SAILED OULD PEGAYSUS AT THE TOP AV HIS SHPIN"



The Conspiracy at BELHAVEN.

by Ellen Olney Kirk.

Part Second..

A CAVALIER in Spite of Himself.

Third Chapter

AFTER we had typewritten that letter and directed it to Miss Gerard, and had seen it lying on the table in the hall, I promptly went to bed, fell asleep, and did not wake up until the maid called me next morning. Then, when she told me that Archie had gone fishing with Uncle John and Uncle Owen, that piece of news put everything else out of my mind. I had a distinct grievance, and it was not until I was sitting at breakfast with Amy, and saw Miss Gerard come in, that with a catch of my breath and a dropping of my eyes I remembered the letter.

Something in her glance round the room made Amy at once explain:

"Oh, Miss Gerard, papa, Uncle Owen and Archie have all gone for a day's fishing with Cousin Hatch, in his yacht."

It was evidently a relief to Miss Gerard to hear this. She sat down, took a sip of cold water, then said, with a little smile, that she had not slept well and preferred to have us talk that morning instead of talking herself. Watching her narrowly, I decided that it was as well that Archie was absent. I did not forgive him for running off and leaving me in the lurch, but still I felt sure that if he had his eyes on Miss Gerard at this moment he would say that that letter had disconcerted her—thrown her off her balance. The point of difference between us which had made us apply this test lay just here. I had insisted that Miss Gerard would simply tear up that letter, and with the remark that such things were "altogether antebellum," put it in the trash-basket.

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Whatever may have disturbed the pulse of the machine, it soon regained its equilibrium, and Archie's holiday was no holiday to Amy and me. Miss Gerard never spared labor, never slurred over a difficulty, but that day it seemed as though she were bent on keeping herself and us up to an ideal mark. And yet something in her whole air and expression made her seem softer and less remote.

Once when she spoke encouragingly to Amy, Amy gratefully caught her hand and kissed it. Miss Gerard laughed softly, and putting her hands on the young girl's fluffy hair, bent and kissed her on the forehead. I could not help thinking that if Archie had seen the tutor's blush, and her vivid glance and smile, he would have hugged himself with delight, and been quite reassured on the marriage question, feeling that not even a high degree in mathematics is incompatible with real sweetness.

•

But Archie was away, and what was more, Uncle Owen came back alone at nine o'clock that evening, very much sunburned and very cross, with the news that Uncle John had decided to join Cousin Hatch in a cruise up the coast, and had taken Archie along with him.

I was raging; I was furious. I had not been used to Archie's going off and leaving me alone. I was used not only to being consulted as to what Archie was to do or not to do, but to deciding the question. I couldn't somehow focus this sudden independence. It never once occurred to me that he had been afraid to stay and face the results of our misdeed, until, next morning, as I was sitting in the little room opening on the gallery, waiting for Miss Gerard to finish the correction of my exercise, Uncle Owen suddenly opened the door, closed it behind him, and stood leaning against it.

Miss Gerard did not turn, probably supposing it was Amy who had entered. He had a letter in his hand, and his startled blue eyes looked out of a face which was still angry and crimson from yesterday's sun and glare. He waited for her to finish her task, then as she rose went straight up to her.

"Miss Gerard," he said in a voice quite unlike his own, "I can't for the life of me understand this."

Her face hung out equally strange signals.

"I—I—I tried to soften it," she now quietly replied.

"You tell me in this letter," he said, lifting the sheet and seeming to read the page, "that you cannot feel that it is right for you to marry me."

She had rallied her powers ever so little.

•

"Is that so strange?" she said with a little laugh. "Nobody before ever asked me to marry him. I have never expected to marry. I have appointed my life on other ideas. I have made my way over a good many practical difficulties, and now see a possible career in view. I have thought little of being happy. I have said to myself that I was perfectly satisfied with a life that offered no private, individual happiness." She paused a moment, and met his straight, questioning glance, or tried to meet it, and her eyes fell. "Until I had your letter," she went on, "I had supposed you hated me."

"Hated you?" he ejaculated. He turned half round, and then said in an odd, agitated voice, "I suppose you hate me."

"I don't hate you at all, Mr. North," said Miss Gerard. "In all my life I have never been so grateful as your letter has made me." She reached out her hand with a sudden impetuosity. A little sob came in her voice as she spoke. "I am often so lonely," she added; "now to realize that you have been thinking kindly of me, that even when you seemed to quarrel with me, find fault with me, condemn me——"

She broke off, for Uncle Owen, awkwardly staring at the hand she had held out, had finally had the grace to take it between both his; then, as if determined at any cost to acquit himself of his duty in the situation, he put the little, fluttering fingers he had caught to his lips.

I couldn't help laughing outright, and at the sound the two started apart. Evidently they had forgotten my presence, and on the instant each regained the self-possession which had been in jeopardy.

•

"You are busy with Beatrix?" he now inquired, folding up the letter, which had been to some degree crushed in the tender passage to which I have alluded.

"Until ten, when Amy comes," Miss Gerard replied.

"Sit down here and have a momentary breathing spell," said Uncle Owen kindly. "Beatrix shall come with me."

He walked toward me as he spoke, took me by the hand, and led me out of the door, pausing for a moment at the threshold to say, "Perhaps, Miss Gerard, I may see you a little later——"

Then outside the door I became aware that I was face to face with an angry man. His clasp on my wrist tightened.

"Look me in the eyes, you imp," said he. But I couldn't; his eyes blazed; his brow was all in a pucker; and for his lips, they were set hard as steel.

"You did it; I know you did," he said.

"Did what?" I demanded.

"That is what I am going to find out. Come with me."

He left nothing to my option. He put one hand on each of my shoulders, and rapidly propelled me along the hall to the door of the tower, up the stairs, and then into the little round room under the flagstaff. This gained, he locked the door.

"Somebody has been impertinently meddling between me and Miss Gerard," he now said, not loudly, but in a voice that vibrated through me and made me tingle all over.

"It was you. I see it in your saucy eyes. How dared you do such a thing?"

I had never seen anybody angry before. A strange thrill of awe and dread passed through me. I was conscious of being confronted with something momentous—something which was so strong that it could take my little childish whims and caprices and break them as one breaks a twig. With a horrible feeling of littleness I gurgled out the whole story.

He did not once take his eyes from me while I made the confession.

"You took a couple of leaves that floated out of the window, copied them on the typewriter, and sent them to Miss Gerard?" he then asked sternly.

I nodded.

"Did you sign my name?"

I nodded again. Oh, where was Archie? It suddenly came across me that, with lame and cowardly caution, Archie had turned tail and run away from this ordeal.

Uncle Owen continued to look at me with that clear, unfaltering look. It now occurred to me that I had the very pages we had copied in the pocket of my frock. I produced them, as if to say:

"The cards were dealt out, you see. I had only to play them."

He caught the sheets from me, glanced at them, then gasped out helplessly:

"Do you mean to say she read that balderdash, that she thought I wrote it—that is, that I wrote it to her? It made me so sick that I cut it out of my book."

*

And he stormed and raged round the room. I myself had thought it "balderdash." It was something like this:

"Nineteen days of meeting you every day, and sometimes a dozen times a day, are teaching me a great deal. Are they doing anything for you? I had believed that I knew my own future. I find that the key to all I regard as precious is in your keeping. I thought that I had measured life, that I had apportioned my heart, that I had adjusted my ambitions. You have changed the balance.

"I have had a horror of yielding to love, of making myself dependent upon a woman's generosity. At first you yourself must have noticed that I fought against your influence. I am so used to sitting in judgment, to criticising, to analyzing, I would not—I dared not—show you what was working in my heart. Every real need of my nature has been so long denied; every fault of brain against heart has been so long stimulated. But face to face with you, so beautiful, so noble, so true and pure, heart and soul have emancipated themselves. I have only to love you, and that is what I do. I have only to ask you if you will be my wife. After all, for us people who are a little curious and experimental, it may be worth trying what happiness, what emancipation, what deeper meaning may lie in the simple, every-day experiences of man and wife."

*

He no longer looked at me; he no longer seemed to be angry with me. A different feeling altogether had him in its clutches. He read that "balderdash" over again, and this time, unless I am very much mistaken, with some complacency, as a man who has drawn trigger with the feeling that his old blunderbuss can do nothing, runs his hand over his weapon when, in spite of all, it has hit the mark.

For it seemed clear that this production of his pen had touched Miss Gerard, and now, on re-reading it, even Uncle Owen was touched. I saw something shining in his eyes. In fact, I myself was so stirred, so upset, I, too, began to cry in a poor, weak-spirited fashion.

"I am glad," said Uncle Owen, turning a deep glance toward me, "that you are not wholly an imp of mischief, that you have some sort of capacity to suffer and feel."

I sniffed and blew my nose.

I felt such a mere atom, seized as it were by fate and tossed round in the maelstrom.

"Who else knows of your doing this cowardly thing?" he now demanded, and when I faltered out "Archie," he uttered an exclamation of surprise, and said he should certainly have expected much better things of a fine, manly boy like Archie.

*

"It was all my fault," I now declared stoutly, for it was enough to have one coward and cheat in the family. "Archie would never have thought of doing it unless I had put him up to it."

Perhaps encouraged by this sign of heroism, Uncle Owen now set to work to try to touch my heart, to move my conscience. He spoke of Miss Gerard's hard struggles, of how cruel it seemed to him for a girl to be caught in the toils of life. She was alone, friendless, compelled to climb other people's stairs, to eat her bread among strangers. Her simple dignity, her high courage, her deep sense of duty ought to have made me loyal to her in turn; instead of which, I had acted the part of a snake—I had stung the breast that warmed me.

As he let these phrases drop word by word into my conscience, all my strength and spirit oozed out; I was like a jelly-fish left by the tide.

Then he made me promise sacredly never to tell any earthly person of my having manœuvred with that letter; above all, that I should never, by confession, by suggestion, by implication, let Miss Gerard suspect that she had been tricked and fooled.

*

"Do you know what you bind me to?" he inquired, his eyes burning down into mine. "If she will marry me, why, I must marry her. There's no other way."

As he uttered these words his grim and tragic demeanor froze the words on my lips.

"I have had no wish to marry," he proceeded. "I haven't got the money to marry on. I think that, of all men on earth, I should probably make the worst husband. But you have put me in such a position that I can't help myself."

"Should you mind very much, Uncle Owen?" I gasped.

He frowned tremendously.

"Mind? Of course I should mind."

I immediately burst into tears.

"What's the matter now?" he demanded.

"Oh, it's so dreadful that you have got to marry a girl you don't like!" I faltered, for it certainly did shock me dreadfully.

"Have I said I didn't like her?" he inquired. "What I said was that I hadn't the money, or the position, or the quiet temper that makes a man worth a woman's acceptance. I don't dream that she would ever condescend to marry me."

"It seemed to me," I now observed mournfully, "that she liked it. Archie said she would; that girls might talk, but when the chance came, he believed they would always jump at it. I said Miss Gerard wouldn't, but I'm afraid she has done so."

Now, even to this day I don't feel sure what it was in this innocent speech that put Uncle Owen into a rage. He flashed out at me with a wrath that left me blinded and bewildered; and when I came back to a consciousness of anything but Uncle Owen's tearing round, I was alone—locked in the top room of the tower like an imprisoned damsel in a story of an enchanted castle.

* * *

Fourth Chapter

WHEN, just before dinner-time, Uncle Owen came to let me out, I had had such a good time watching the morning vapors break up into masses of white cottony clouds, with chinks of delicious blue between, then roll away altogether like the white sails of the passing ships, I had half forgotten my miserable experience until he kissed me. Then I seemed all at once to realize that in the interval my soul had grown. I threw my arms round his neck and told him I would do whatever he asked.

"Honest Indian?" he demanded.

"Honest Indian," I replied.

Downstairs events had moved on. Some cousins had driven over for a morning visit, and had taken Amy away to spend a few days at their cottage ten miles away. Thus at this critical moment the family was reduced to Aunt Mary, the tutor, Uncle Owen and myself, and a different régime set in.

Aunt Mary had, however, taken care to tell Miss Gerard that this would be a good opportunity to give me a careful grounding, and that I was to have the whole six hours of individual tutoring. It was awfully hard!

But above all else, Uncle Owen watched me as a cat watches a mouse. If I hadn't known he was furious with me, I should have thought he was downright fond of me, for he was all the time looking me up.

Still I had a point of vantage for observing how carefully he was carrying out the rôle he had prescribed to himself toward Miss Gerard. It would have seemed incredible to the others how he put himself out to please her nowadays. His shy little attentions, his dumb little delicacies of consideration would have seemed to an "ante-bellum" mind like Amy's much like old-fashioned love-making. I, of course, knew that it was quite fictitious. Every day he would say to me:

"You put me in for this," and he would groan and look excessively cross when, for example, I found him laying a spray of beautiful roses, drenched in their own dew, by her plate at breakfast one morning.

*

Then after dinner he sat under the trees with us; he took us sailing; he rowed us up the river; they talked, and instead of remaining cold, skeptical, critical, he made every effort to understand her outgoings of feeling, her likings and dislikings.

Then, in return, he told her of all his own ill-luck, the mischance by which he had been born poor. He confided his own present ambitions, and with a blushing, half-averted face she told of what she expected to do after getting her Ph.D.

"Confound your Ph.D.!" said Uncle Owen. "I don't want you to have a Ph.D.," and as he spoke there was a light in his eyes which suggested——

But no matter. All he desired was to pay his just debts. I had, so he told me, given her a claim upon him which he must meet.

*

And it was clear she had never forgotten that letter. Once she alluded to his always using a typewriter instead of a pen.

"I was afraid," he laughed, "that you couldn't read my abominable hand."

"You made it clear," she said with a little nod. She was not a woman to show sentiment, but there was a kind look in her eyes as she spoke, and I felt sure that she had read that letter over and over again.

When this happened we were out in the boat, under the great rose arch of sunset. I was sitting on the bow, and was troubling my soul as little as possible about the dialogue going on. But all at once Miss Gerard exclaimed, in a voice which had a thrill in it:

"Could I love you all in a moment? Could I part with my ideas and ambitions all in a moment? Was it not enough that I was grateful to you, that something within me responded to every word you wrote—that—that—that we could begin and be friends—that we are friends—aren't we?"

* * *

Fifth Chapter

WHEN Archie came and spoiled all this. When we went in we were met by Uncle John, Cousin Amy and Archie, and all sat down to tea, and under the bright light could look at each other. Amy exclaimed on the instant at Miss Gerard's improved appearance; and, indeed, she was perfectly beautiful. Then Uncle John told Uncle Owen he had smoothed out all his frowns and wrinkles, and looked ten years younger. And as for Aunt Mary, why, there was a clear light in her eyes such as he hadn't seen in them for years.

"I give in, Mary," Uncle John went on; "I've renounced Emory and all his ideas. I stole a leaf out of your book, and on the yacht I have been living by your schedule."

Change about is fair play. Aunt Mary was thriving on the fruits and nuts which Uncle John had given up for good.

Archie, it seemed to me, avoided me a little that first evening. He told me all about the cruise, but in a perfunctory sort of way, to make conversation.

Oh, that Archie—Archie and Uncle John together—what a bungle they made of it!

*

Archie had repented. The reason he had run away and left me was, as I had guessed, that he was in a terrible funk over the possible consequences of the letter we had sent. Then one night on the sea he had confessed to Uncle John, and Uncle John said that the only cure for such a heartless, such a monstrous joke was to tell Miss Gerard that she had been made a fool of. Archie had taken all the blame and the shame upon himself, and before he slept that night had had an interview with Miss Gerard and laid bare the whole story.

Archie told me afterward how pluckily she received it, but how he knew all the time that she was hurt, from the faint, faraway sound of her voice, which had a quaver in it.

Well, I half awoke in the middle of the night with the feeling that somebody was in my room, and saw a figure which I seemed to recognize as Miss Gerard's at my table. I slept again, but when I really waked up at dawn, glancing at the table I saw that Miss Gerard really had been there in the night, for some books of hers were gone.

Then, as soon as I was out of bed, I heard Archie's step, and, peeping out, met him.

"Oh, B!" he burst forth, "I told her."

"Told her what? Told who?"

"Told Miss Gerard what a beastly cad I was. Told her last night."

Then I knew. I knew on the instant that she couldn't stay in a house where she had been, as it were, betrayed and handed over to the enemy; that she had packed her things by night; that she was going away.

I stared at Archie; then, without waiting to dress, without any thought but one, I flew along the hall, made a dash for the tower, knocked at Uncle Owen's door, and in a minute more had told him the secret he was so jealous for had passed into Miss Gerard's keeping—that I was sure she was going away.

He said nothing, fidgeted about a minute, looked at his watch, then said: "Skip!" and I skipped at once.

*

I crept back to my own room. It was still only half-past five. I put on my clothes, but only to be ready for some new trouble.

It was just about half-past six when Uncle Owen came in.

"Just tell your uncle and aunt," said he, "that I have to go back to town. Ask them to have my things sent to me."

"Are you going away with Miss Gerard?" I demanded, feeling a good deal bewildered.

He gave me a glance that seemed to scorch my hair.

"Miss Gerard isn't going away," he said. "Don't speak of such a possibility. I'm going. That's all."

"Have you told her so?"

"Yes, I told her."

"Was she very angry?" I questioned, limp and weak, but extremely curious.

He seemed to brace himself up, as if realizing that I was an element to be reckoned with.

"That's all patched up," he said, now quite earnestly. "Nothing is to happen; everything is to be as usual, and you are to forget certain things."

"She won't marry you, then?" I wailed, for somehow I had come to desire it.

"Of course she won't marry me," he cried, growing very red. He caught me in his arms as he spoke, crumpled me against his breast, and kissed me three times.

*

When Archie came in to breakfast he stared at Miss Gerard and seemed to be breathing hard. She was quite her old self, and gave us a fine talk about the history of Cuba. It was all a dream, twenty-four hours later, that Uncle Owen had been in the house at all. Uncle John and Aunt Mary were interested in their new diet and seemed to care about nothing else. Amy had all her experiences on her fortnight's visit to confide to us. Archie had gone in for a good hard dig, and as for Miss Gerard—she was in fighting trim.

If anybody knew anything of what was behind this month's experience, what was beyond it, what was in the most sacred depths within it, I was not told.

Uncle Owen came for a couple of days at Christmas. There was something about his way of looking at Miss Gerard and talking to her which made me think that he hoped some day she would change her mind, but she hid any feelings of her own as we had hidden away our presents before Christmas.

In the spring, papa, mamma and Jeanne came back. In June Miss Gerard took her Ph.D., but it was all of no use, for in August she and Uncle Owen were married.

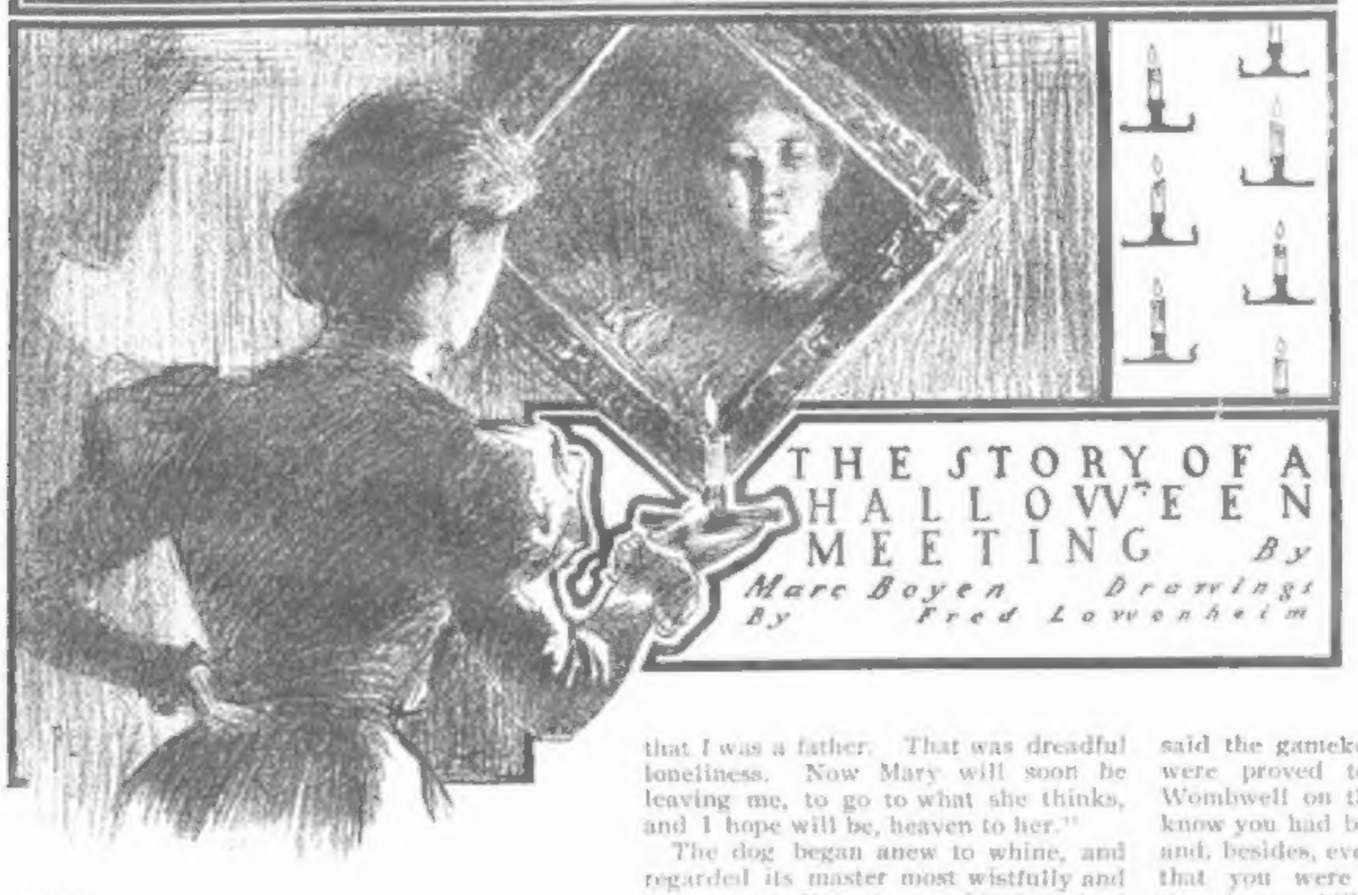
"COULD I LOVE YOU ALL IN A MOMENT?"

THE RETURN OF BARRETT

THE STORY OF A HALLOW'EEN MEETING

By Marc Boyen

Drawings By Fred Lowenheim



A CHEERFUL, ruddy fire burned in the grate, and gave out a good comfortable heat, very welcome on that cool Hallowe'en. It was particularly acceptable to John Foster, the gamekeeper, a well-preserved, middle-aged man, who was sitting in front of the table near the window. But for the warmth of the fire he would have been chilled by the unusual loneliness. To the quietness around he was accustomed, for the gamekeeper's cottage in which he lived was situated just within a wood; but the stillness in the house itself was something extraordinary.

Foster was pulling contentedly at his pipe, a sure sign that the writing on which he had been engaged was finished satisfactorily. Account books and forms were littered about the table. The gamekeeper arranged them in order, and then leaned back in his chair and lazily blew big clouds of smoke.

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Outside the light was waning, and the fairies, according to popular notions, were beginning their carnival and their temporary sway. But Foster was thinking about his creature comfort, and not about fairies.

He got up to put away his books in a cupboard, and took the opportunity to throw some coal on the fire, and to pat his dog, which had chosen a comfortable place on the hearth. Then, as the twilight deepened, he walked about the room, thinking. Shortly after mid-day dinner his man had gone away to spend a couple of days with a married son, while his child was attending some Hallowe'en festivities at a friend's house in a neighboring village.

John Foster was thinking about his child, and as he murmured to himself, "My little girl," his face beamed with love.

Mary was not his own daughter, although for four years she had lived in the house, where she had brought sunshine, and of which she had been the good angel. He had adopted her and taken her into his home and heart when she had, through the burning of a mill, lost her grandfather, who was her only relative and her natural protector.

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With the stony-hearted, unsympathetic old miller she had led a joyless, lonely life. He had had the reputation of being a close-fisted, cold-blooded man, without any heart. Compared with her previous home (if such it could be called), the girl found the gamekeeper's house a veritable haven of rest and happiness, and she blossomed out into a pretty, attractive girl, with black hair and deep blue eyes.

Foster lighted a lamp which he placed in the window of an adjoining room, saying to himself smilingly as he did so: "She will get her first greeting from me when she comes to the turn in the wood." Then he went back and put the coffee-pot on the hob, and his smile ended in a profound sigh.

"Dear, dear," he said to himself, "I hope she won't find a lover too soon, though I don't see how the young fellows can help falling in love with her. It is only to be expected, but I hope it won't come yet."

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Foster's sighs awoke the sympathy of the dog, which got up from its cozy corner, walked gravely to its master, pressed its head against his legs, and, by low, pitiful moans, tried to show its feeling. But the gamekeeper did not heed; he went on soliloquizing:

"Yes, that's only to be expected. I shall have to get accustomed to being alone again. Well, I've borne it before. First of all, my dear wife left me and took our little child with her, almost before I had got to realize that I was a father. That was dreadful loneliness. Now Mary will soon be leaving me, to go to what she thinks, and I hope will be, heaven to her."

The dog began anew to whine, and regarded its master most wistfully and sympathetically; then suddenly raised its head, gave a short, snapping bark, and rushed to the door, where it crouched down, and the bark sank into a soft whine.

"Who can be there?" said Foster, as he strode to the door, which he opened. Along the garden path in the dusk came some one who, judging from the firmness of the steps, was evidently well acquainted with the place. A man appeared, carrying a bundle on his back. His hair was cropped short, and he carried his hat in his hand.

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The gamekeeper, on recognizing the man, fell back a step in astonishment.

The newcomer raised his head, which at first had hung down in shame, and out of his sunken eyes looked appealingly at Foster without uttering a word. His clothes were dusty, and his whole appearance showed that he had walked far.

"Get away from here, Barrett," said Foster; "I want nothing to do with you or anybody like you." And he gave the dog, which had sprung forward joyfully toward the stranger, a savage kick with his foot.

"Oh, for God's sake, Mr. Foster," begged the man addressed as Barrett, "don't turn me away from your door. I have walked many a weary mile—all the way from Portland. I have come, just as the prodigal went home to his father, to confess my sins and pray for your forgiveness."

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The appealing, almost despairing, tone went to the gamekeeper's heart, in spite of his evident desire to have nothing to do with his visitor.

"Come in, then," he said roughly, and turned to lead the way, having first vented his ill will on the dog by kicking it clean out of doors as a reward for its attention to the stranger.

"What are you doing about here, Barrett? Where did you come from, anyhow?"

"From Portland prison. I came directly here," said the man in a low, lifeless tone.

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"And you have the cool nerve to come right back here, and to my house—straight from prison. There's no room for such as you under my roof, and I won't have you anywhere about. Do you understand that?"

"They gave me my clothes back a week ago and told me I was free—that the last year of my sentence had been remitted for good conduct," and Barrett spoke as if he had not even heard the harsh words addressed to him. "I was dazed when I got out, and I haven't got over it yet. I didn't seem to have my body with me, at all. But one thing I could not get away from, and that was my shame, and, oh, that was bitter. It has taken me the whole week to get here—about two hundred and fifty miles, and I had to walk most of the way, and begged for what little I got to eat."

Then, with a sudden outburst, he cried, "Oh, Mr. Foster, do believe me! I swear I was not guilty—not even of poaching, letting alone killing Jones. Only one thing has kept me from going stark mad during my imprisonment, and that was the thought that when I was free I should be able to come to you and tell you that I was not guilty. Won't you believe me? Won't you try to believe me?"

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"I utterly fail to see that you were wronged in any way whatever," said the gamekeeper, after a pause. "You were proved to have sold the game in Wombwell on the following day; and you know you had been sent there on an errand; and, besides, everybody who saw you noticed that you were looking scared. Nobody thought you killed the gamekeeper on purpose, or else you would have been hung, sure enough, instead of getting only a few years of imprisonment. It was hard enough for those who had taken you in, and it was hardest of all for me, who had once had you in my house, and had recommended you. And I had cared for you as if you had been my own son, too. You know I did."

Barrett winced. "Yes, I know how kind you were to me. You forgave me my first slip, even although you couldn't keep me in the house any longer. When you had once forgiven me, as you did, you might have known that I couldn't go wrong again, Mr. Foster. I swear again I was not even guilty of poaching. Won't you believe me?"

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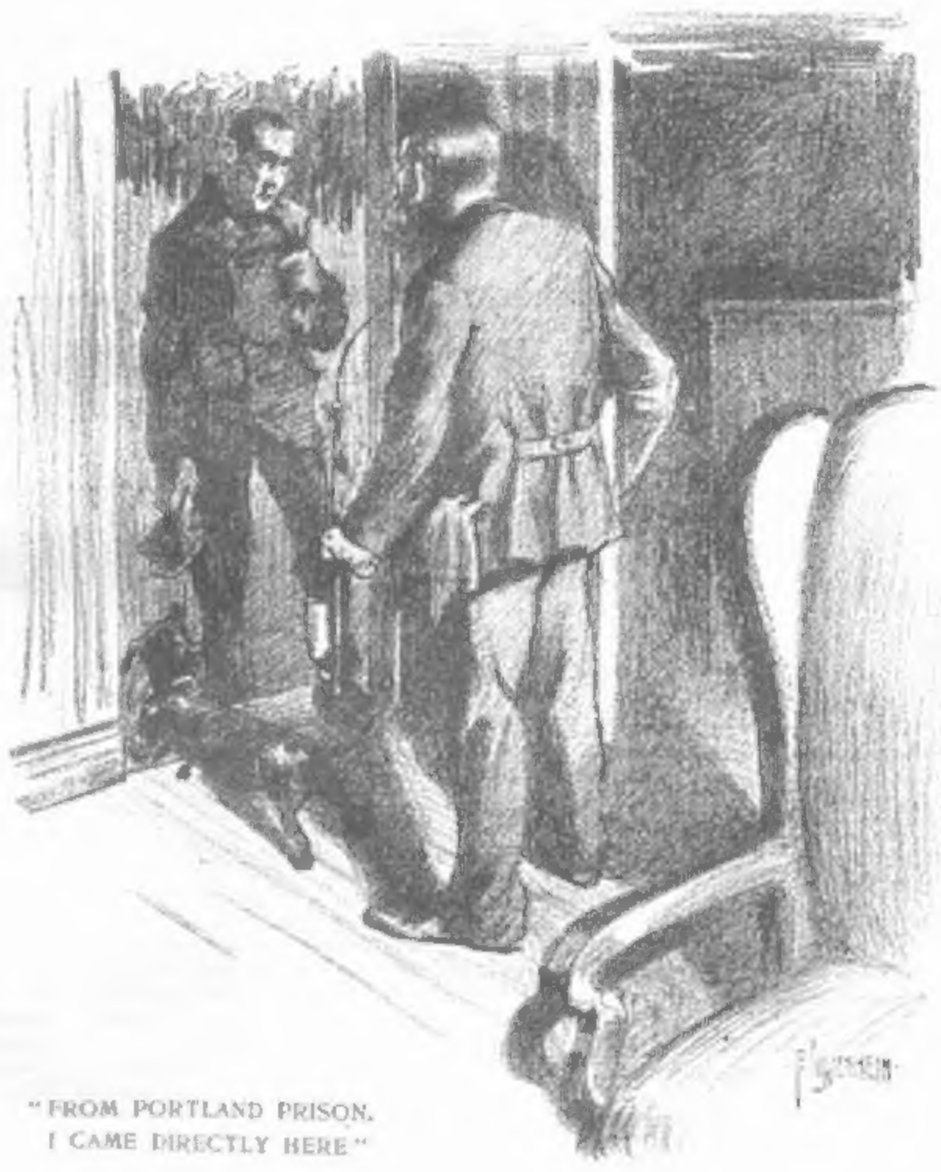
Foster turned and went to the door to scare away the dog, which had kept up a continual whine; but as soon as he opened the door the animal rushed into the room and danced joyfully about Barrett, who did not dare to respond to his kind greeting.



"FROM PORTLAND PRISON. I CAME DIRECTLY HERE"

The gamekeeper was beginning to soften. Formerly he would have staked anything on Barrett's trustworthiness, after he had forgiven him his first slip. But still no objection could reasonably be raised against the sentence which had condemned the young man. He had been proved to have sold game in Wombwell the day after a poaching affray which had resulted in the death of a keeper. From all accounts, it was not by any means his first offense, either. So, the gamekeeper did not know what to think.

"Well, sit down here by the fire," he said less gruffly; "you look tired. Say what you have to say—and hurry about it."

Barrett looked the gamekeeper squarely in the eye and said: "I was not the poacher, nor did I sell the game—or any game. It was a case of mistaken identity. On the afternoon of the day before the poaching affair I was at Mapplewell in the furze behind the mill, and I didn't fire a shot."

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Foster looked steadily and thoughtfully in front of him. "Why did you take your sentence so quietly? You didn't say a word in protest. If your conscience had been clear you would have spoken out. Why didn't you speak then as you have spoken now? I might have believed in your innocence then—what difference does my believing in you make now? You've served your time in prison."

"Because I deserved punishment for something else, so I don't kick on that score. My worst punishment was what I suffered from my conscience. I knew I shouldn't be believed if I told the truth. It was a judgment on me. The mill fire was due to me. I was smoking there, and the furze caught fire—that is, it began to smoulder. I knew it would be likely to spread to the mill, but I went away and left it smouldering, for the miller had once served me a mean trick, so I didn't mind if he did get a scare. I didn't think the mill would burn down. The old man died of a broken heart because of the loss of his mill; he was a miser and an old wretch, but that made no difference, and I felt I was to blame. That was why I looked worried. When I heard of his death I seemed to lose all heart. Now you know everything there is to tell."

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The two men sat still and silent for some time, and then Foster rose and began to pace about. Stopping in front of Barrett, he said kindly:

"You are tired, Frank?"

"Yes, tired to death, Mr. Foster. I wish I were dead."

"Death doesn't come so easily for the wishing," replied the gamekeeper. "I'm all alone, but I can get you something to eat and some hot coffee. You'll feel better after you eat something."

"And able to set out again, I suppose," said Barrett, with quivering lip.

"Why, you see, it's awkward—very awkward. Even if I believe you, that isn't to say others will. It would be very unpleasant for you about here, you know."

Barrett rose wearily. "That's so. I'd forgotten that. Perhaps I'd better be moving before anybody comes back," he said resignedly.

Foster looked at him and noticed how strengthless he was. Then he said: "My man has gone to see a relative. If you care to sleep in his room—where you used to sleep, you know—I've nothing against it. Only, be sure and don't come down in the morning until I call you."

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When he had eaten, Barrett rose with: "I know the way, Mr. Foster," and taking his bundle and the candle, he left the room.

Upon reaching his garret the released convict paced restlessly up and down. Then Foster heard the boards of the bed creak. It seemed as if Barrett had thrown himself on the bed dressed. Soon followed the sound of deep sobbing.

"Poor fellow! Poor fellow!" murmured the soft-hearted gamekeeper. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." And he fussed about and made a noise so as not to hear Barrett sobbing.

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Foster was thinking that Mary was late when he heard the sound of merry voices.

"Who's brought you home?" he asked, as he noticed another woman's form in the doorway. "Why, Jessie Roberts, as I live! Where have you been hiding yourself lately, Jessie? I've not seen you for I don't know how long. Why, what have you girls got in your hands? So you have been pilfering my cabbages out of the garden," he added with mock severity.

"No," answered Jessie, laughing, "only Mary is just as superstitious as she can be. At the party she was trying every way to find out her lover. As we came through the

EDITOR'S NOTE—This story, The Return of Barrett, is adapted for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, from the German of Marc Boyen, in the Illustriert Zeitung, by L. de V. Matthewman.

garden, she insisted that we should shut our eyes and go hand in hand to pick a cabbage each, so as to learn something about our future lovers. She was unfortunate every time at the party, and she doesn't wish to give up until she has found a promise of a lover. She was scared to death coming along the wood. She thought a goblin was going to fetch her. She's so superstitious. That's where her Irish blood comes in."

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"Don't believe a word of it, uncle," said Mary, laughing. "Jessie is trying to get even with me for teasing her about her success. She found a lover every time she tried. She put nuts on the grate—one for herself and one for somebody whom she wouldn't mention—and the nuts browned quietly together. That's a sign that she will find her lover and be married soon."

The girls had thrown off their shawls. Mary kissed her uncle heartily, and said: "Jessie was tired of the nonsense, so we slipped away and came here. We'll have Hallowe'en all to ourselves, and we'll try everything over again; won't we, Jessie?" To her uncle she said: "Jessie's going to stay with me to-night, uncle."

"And you'll be chatting like magpies all night through, I suppose," added Foster with a smile.

"Oh, no, we won't. We are going to do all our talking now," was the quick reply.

"Hadn't you better get Jessie some supper?" suggested the gamekeeper.

"Oh, please don't," pleaded Jessie; "we've been eating all the time. We are tired of it."

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"Besides, she's anxious to examine her cabbage," put in Mary teasingly. "Well, I declare! If she hasn't got a beautiful head of cabbage, and I've got a withered old thing. I might as well throw mine away. There's no earth on the roots of yours, Jessie, so he won't be rich. Cut the stalk and taste it, then we shall know what sort of a disposition he has. That's very important."

Jessie laughingly did as she was requested and pronounced the stalk sweet. Although she had made fun of Mary's superstition, the augury was not unpleasant to her.

Foster noticed that even when Jessie laughed her face quickly recovered its wonted gravity. She was distinctly good looking, an admirable girl, and had, moreover, a little money in her own right, but still she had not, as far as he knew, any sweetheart, and he thought it was rather singular in some respects.

Mary proposed some nuts and apples. She insisted on going through the nut-roasting experiment, declaring that she was going to break the bad spell if it took her all night, if only just to spite Jessie, who was getting as conceited, so Mary teasingly declared, as if she had already found her lover. Jessie only laughed at Mary's sallies at her expense, and then turned the tables, when Foster again smiled on her.

"What's amiss with the doggie?" asked Mary suddenly. "Why does he stand in front of the stair door like that and wag his tail? Does he want to go upstairs? Is he getting superstitious, too, uncle?" and she laughed gayly at her queer idea.

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Foster gave a violent start. Truth to tell, he had been so interested in the girls that he had forgotten his guest; and he was afraid lest the dog's affection for Barrett should betray the ex-convict's presence. He spoke to the dog so angrily that the animal slunk away from the stair door and hid under the sofa, where it lay with its muzzle resting on its extended forepaws, still staring intently at the stair door.

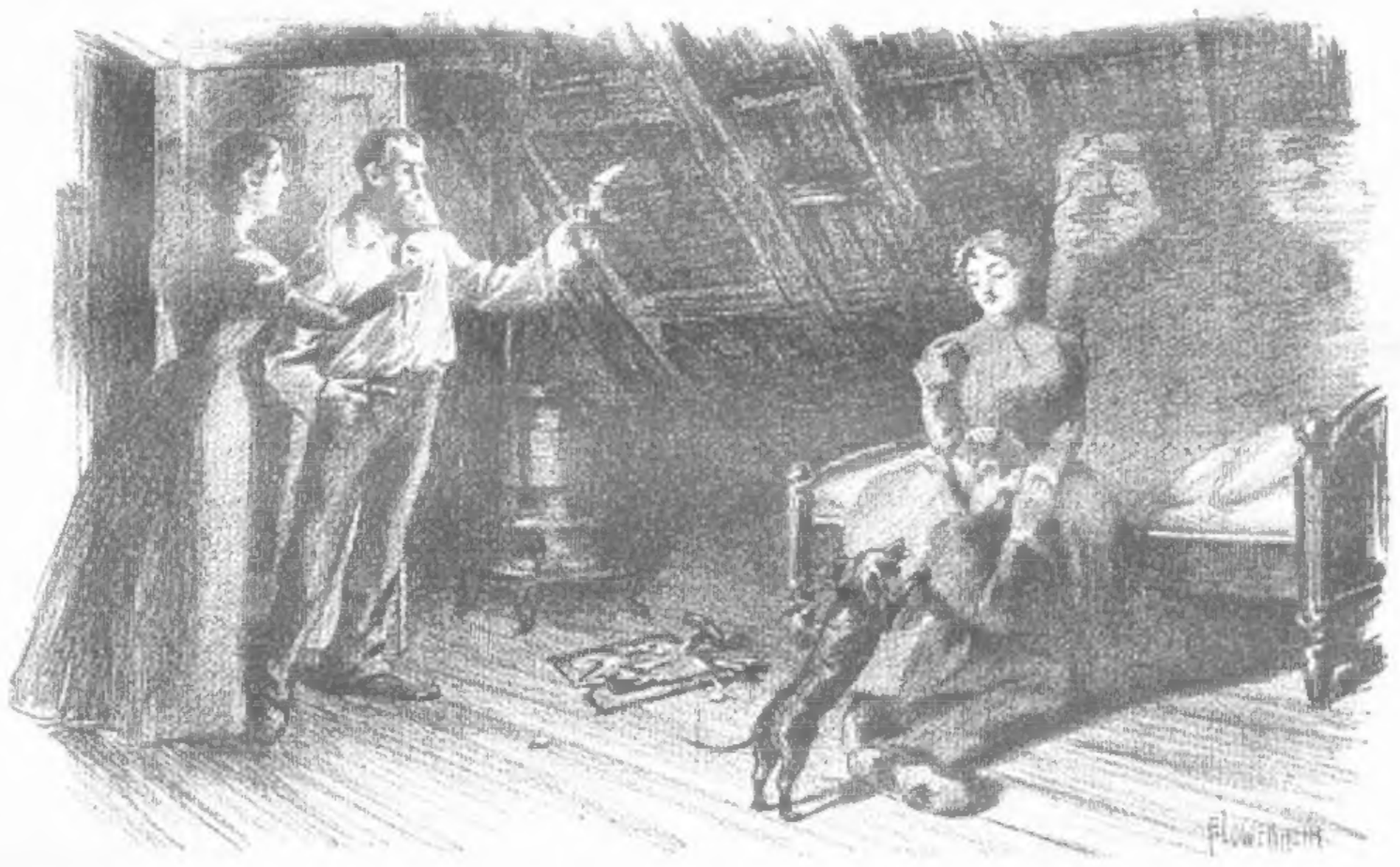
The gamekeeper joined heartily in the girl's attempts at divination. He put on the fire a pan of peas in the pod, among which was one bean pod. When they were poured out, the one who got the bean pod would be the one to marry first. The girls insisted on three plates—one for the gamekeeper. The girls and he searched through the peas—the bean was found on Jessie's plate. Mary maintained that the gamekeeper himself had so arranged it.

"Uncle, who can it be?" she asked. "Jessie takes no stock in any of the young men around here. At least, she says she doesn't. Perhaps she won't let me know, because she's afraid she'll lose him when he sees me! I'd cut her out."

Foster found that he couldn't listen very attentively to the chatter of the girls, for he imagined that he heard Barrett pacing about overhead, and was afraid that the girls might hear the sound and begin to question him. So, to cover his disquietude, he began to talk about being tired and needing rest for the hard day he had before him, and bade the girls good-night, telling them not to hurry, and not to be surprised if they heard footsteps upstairs, as he might have to arrange his guns. Above all, he told them they must not let the dog get upstairs, as he did not want to be troubled.

The girls drew their chairs close to the fire. Everything was very quiet.

"We cannot think of going to bed yet," said Mary. "We shall have to look into the mirror to try to see our lover's face, first."



"SHE BELIEVED IN ME!"

Jessie nodded laughingly and approvingly as she said, "You are the most superstitious girl I ever knew. You surely don't believe in such utter nonsense as that?"

"Yes, I do," maintained Mary stoutly. "You'll see if it doesn't all come true."

They ate nuts and apples, chatted and joked. Jessie watched with gladness the cheery girl who sat with her, who was so anxious to try all the methods she knew for looking into the future and discovering what luck she might expect—most of all, what kind of a lover she would have and how soon he would come. She herself laughed just as heartily at death signs as at prognostications of good luck. But she had no Irish blood in her veins, as Mary had.

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The gamekeeper heard the merry voices of the girls and was cheered. The pale, earnest face of Jessie had put him out somewhat. He had known her for a long time, and knew her to be a most admirable girl. He could not understand how it was that gossip did not credit her with a sweetheart. She worked busily, although she had no need to do so, unless it was the need of driving away the feeling of loneliness. He could not help noticing that during the past few years the girl had aged sadly.

Suddenly Foster started up in bed. Hadn't folks said formerly that there seemed to be some understanding between her and Frank Barrett? To be sure they had, and he had forgotten all about it. He had noticed it himself at the time. No wonder the poor girl was pale and altered. What more likely to steal the bloom from a girl's face than concealed love for one who had shown himself unworthy. And to think that the two were under the same roof, each unaware of the presence of the other, and, above all, on Hallowe'en, when fairies, both good and bad, are so busily at work!

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He was in a quandary. Should he get up and dress and interfere in the matter? Should he tell Jessie what he knew and what he had been told? Could he arrange to get Barrett out of the way before morning? But, then, where could he send the man? Perhaps the ex-convict would not like to meet Jessie; probably she would be unwilling to see him. And so thoughts chased each other through the gamekeeper's head until, at last, sleep pressed heavily on his tired eyelids.

The hands of the big clock in the room below pointed to half-past eleven.

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"Now, Jessie," said Mary, "you've got to go and look in the big mirror, and you've got to go alone, you know. I don't like to go alone first, but I'll go after you. You're to take a candle, an apple and a comb. Put the candle down near the mirror, hold the apple in your left hand while you eat it, and at the same time comb your hair and look in the glass. You ought to see the face of your future sweetheart, just behind you, looking over your shoulder into the mirror. If your luck is good you'll see a face," added Mary, laughing heartily.

"Where is the mirror?" asked Jessie.

"In the room at the top of the stairs—second door to the right. There is a very old mirror there—a big one, and that will be best. Now, don't stand looking into it all night. I want to go after you, remember. There's nobody there. Dick went away this afternoon. Uncle gave him leave for a day or two, and he's visiting his son."

Jessie stood up. She had no wish to look into the mirror, but she did desire to enter the room which had once been Frank's before he was branded as a criminal, and here an unexpected chance was offered to her.

So she took the candle which Mary had fetched for her, and, opening the stair door, was going to ascend when Mary called: "Here, you mustn't forget the apple and the comb. Comb your hair and eat the apple. You are only allowed five minutes."

How quiet everything was. The wind was whistling gently, and that was the only sound to be heard, except the creaking of the stairs as she mounted.

She entered the room very slowly—hesitatingly. There was the bed with hangings, which were closed, where Frank had formerly slept. But now his head was resting on a much harder pillow. What would he be like when he came out of prison, where he had still another year to serve? Of what use would he be in life to himself or any one else when he got free?

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The comb and the apple she put down. She raised the candle to the glass, in which she saw reflected her sad face. With trembling hand she put down the candle, and, covering her face, wept.

"Alone, all alone in life," she sobbed. "Oh, Frank, why did this happen?" and the sob became almost a cry.

In a minute she again raised her eyes, and lifted her hands to take the mirror from the wall, and as she did so her eyes mechanically sought the reflection of her face. Then a shriek rang through the house, followed by the sound of breaking glass.

Just as she fainted, she heard, "Jessie! Oh, Jessie!" Frank caught her and saved her from falling on the floor.

Below, the dog barked and then sprang up the steps. Once in the room it danced about the figure of Frank and the unconscious girl, whom he held tightly clasped in his arms as he sobbed: "Oh, Jessie, Jessie! It has been so awfully hard, my poor girl!"

A few seconds later Mary's anxious face appeared. When she reached the door she stood bewildered, for there was Jessie in a man's arms; and the man was none other than Frank Barrett, the convict. Mary screamed as if some one were killing her.

The noise was increased by the deep bass voice of the gamekeeper. In rather scanty clothing, candle in one hand and a big revolver in the other, came Foster.

Frank turned to him appealingly a face which was contorted by pain. "Oh, Mr. Foster," he said pleadingly.

Just then Jessie's eyes opened, and she clasped her hands together and looked wildly and beseechingly at the gamekeeper.

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"Oh, Mr. Foster, don't hurt him; don't hurt him, and don't give him up. Please shelter him—he has trusted himself in your house! Oh, don't send him back to that prison, Mr. Foster. It will kill both him and me. He promised you to be good, and he was. He wasn't guilty. I never believed him guilty. It was all a mistake!"

The gamekeeper, who was deeply moved, nodded consolingly. As for Frank, he sank on his knees, sobbing: "Thank God, she believed in me! God bless you!"

And he nestled closer to Jessie, whose hand rested soothingly on his bowed head.

"It's all right, Jessie," said Foster. "He's free. His last year was remitted for good conduct. Let's all go downstairs. That confounded dog won't be quiet until we get into a warm room. You go down, all of you. I'll join you in a minute, Mary," he added meaningly, "don't you think you'd better pick up this broken glass?"

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A few minutes later the gamekeeper and Mary joined the others.

"Let's talk over old times," said Foster. "The little fairies have been at work to-night, haven't they? That's a good sign for the next year. We'll find some way which will lead from old times to good new ones, and we'll forget the times between. Now, Frank, my boy, cheer up! As long as Jessie holds to you you'll be all right, never fear. Let's all drink to your success. God bless us all! Do you want to roast any more nuts, Jessie? You can tell us the name this time."

And far into the morning the talk was of good old times, and of the good fairies of Hallowe'en, and of the happy days to come.

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THE SEVEN SOCIETY

SOME years ago seven men, who were all close friends, were seated at dinner at their club when some one suggested that they form a little society, and meet each Hallowe'en so long as any of the members lived. When death broke their circle, the table was still to be set for seven, with the empty chair as a reminder of the departed one. All the survivors were to attend the funeral of each member of the club.

The idea was a novel one and was indorsed by all present. The following year they met again, and two of the chairs were empty. As year followed year, the gap widened until there were more empty chairs than filled ones, and the dinner became more and more sombre as the heads became fewer and whiter.

Finally, Major Halston was the last left. Faithful to the compact, on last Hallowe'en he sat wearily down to the last anniversary dinner. He was about to eat, when suddenly he looked around, and lo, the other six chairs were occupied by shadowy forms, and each of the original seven sat in his accustomed place.

Silently, sadly, the old Major finished his dinner. Then, raising his glass to his lips, he called each one of the vanished friends by name, bowed his head in token of recognition to each one, and said, "Friends, we will soon meet again."

He drained his glass to the dregs, and sank back motionless in his chair. The last man of the seven had joined his companions.

The following morning the newspapers announced his death from heart failure, and carefully suppressed the tragic story of The Seven Society.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED A.D. 1728

Philadelphia, October 29, 1898

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The Dark Valley of Prosperity

THE great test of the individual is not poverty, it is wealth; it is not failure, it is success; it is not struggle, it is attainment.

In days of battle against adverse conditions, man has his mental faculties unified, concentrated and focused on the conquest of his environments, on placing himself on a higher plane. He bears the trials of daily life and its discouragements as bravely as he can, because the Angel of Hope points out to him the light shining through the clouds; shows him the green fields and restful pastures just beyond; whispers to him heartening words of sweet assurance of happier days to come—the days when his dreams shall all come true.

But when the strain and pressure of anxiety is lightened, when the mists of doubt and hope deferred melt into the dawn of realization, when the future seems assured—then comes the relentless test of success.

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The American nation is to-day facing the temptations of success. We have defeated a third-rate Power of the earth; we have surprised and startled Europe with the force of our arms and the bravery and skill of our soldiers; we have risen like a modern Colossus of Rhodes and straddled two hemispheres. We have been victorious in the first "war of humanity" in history.

But let us be great enough, as a people, not to be carried away by our success. We have rescued Cuba and the Cubans from the hands of tyranny, and now it is our duty to prove to ourselves and to the world that our cause was just and our spirit true, by providing, at the earliest possible moment, a proper Government for these new wards of the nation.

There is danger that our success will make us unduly vain, arrogant and assertive; that we shall feel we can over-ride the whole world. Our dream of territorial expansion may sweep us into channels of new danger. Let us beware of the treacherous phases of success, the subtle tests that will bring to the surface national weakness, unnoted or undeveloped in our days of struggle. The man who picks his steps carefully on a rough road is less liable to fall than the self-confident, vain man, wrapped up in the mantle of his own infallibility and so sure of his path that he need not watch his steps.

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As a nation, we should accept our successes with modesty, with calmness, and with dignity. We should see that there has been much in the war of which we have no right to be proud. We started in to fight with a criminal lack of preparation, and more of our soldiers perished by Government neglect than fell before the shot and shell of the Spaniards. Let the measure of our success give us new courage, new confidence, new faith, but let the memory of the elements of our weakness make us more watchful, more humble, nobler and stronger to wield our new power for the best good of ourselves and the world.

What is true of the nation is equally true of individuals. Our soldiers and sailors have been brave and heroic; they have faced danger undaunted; they have been equal to their opportunity. The people are lauding the Admirals who led our ships to victory at Manila and Santiago. The Generals who led the invasion of a tropic island, fighting the horrors of war in its worst phases, and the more dangerous ambush of fever and pestilence, are justly honored by the nation. But these leaders must not become intoxicated by the spirit of their success. They should feel the just pride of having done their duty, not the petty vanity of posing as heroes.

But some of them are showing as much eagerness to face the camera as they did to face the cannon. When a new picture of one of our newly successful Generals comes out every day, when he appears in full uniform in a hundred picturesque poses, that show self-consciousness in every move—then there is danger of such a man being unable to stand his success.

When the Rough Riders invade New York, and carry things with a high hand, swaggering under their weight of glory, posing theatrically in public places, trading on their new-found honors, and boasting of their own bravery—then it is but fair to say that they are in danger of not being equal to the supreme test of success. This is true of some, but not of all.

Many of these brave men have had the courage of simplicity, of true and manly simplicity. They have avoided the centre of the stage, and, while having the consciousness and satisfaction of brave deeds nobly done, they do not court the calcium light of public approbation; they do not hunger for the public kisses of silly girls. They do not arrange the leaves of their laurel wreath in the streets; they do not stand in the market-place polishing their own halos.

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The testing power of success and prosperity is shown in a large picturesque way in the nation to-day, with its stage still occupied by the brave defenders of the nation, while the scenery and setting of war are being packed away for some future need.

But this testing by success is a process going on among us every moment. It touches every phase of life. It reveals many weaknesses beside vanity.

There is the man whom poverty found generous, charitable, helpful in thought and act, planning the good he would do when wealth came to his hands. Too often, when prosperity does come, that man is transformed into a selfish, grasping member of society, hard and penurious to his employees, forgetful of old associates, arrogant and assertive to his subordinates.

There are men who, having attained some position of prominence, vitalized some great opportunity, made a success that a thousand others could equal had they the chance, stand aloof in their assumption of uniqueness and exact tribute from all contemporaries. Like Gessler of Austria, they place their hat on a pole in the public square and demand that all men should bow to it. Their natural voice becomes deep and orotund, they have an over-weening sense of their own importance, they have an air of constantly thinking and acting the thought—"It is I, even I, who have done this mighty thing."

The world is so small and eternity so great, the acts of any individual so trifling when compared to the sum of all thought, the success of any individual so dependent on the coöperation, sympathy and help of those around him, that no one man can do any act that justifies his being carried away by his success.

A man who has accomplished aught of real worth in life has a right to feel genuine pleasure in it, but he must feel that his new power ever opens to him new responsibilities, new duties. His should be the genuine thankfulness for being equal to his opportunities, for being able to make full use of the talents committed to his care. His should be the noble pride of trusteeship, not the empty vanity of proprietorship.

As we walk through the dark valley of prosperity, let our constant wish and prayer be: "Oh, that my heart and life may ever be simple, true and humble, that I may not exchange all that is best in me for a petty triumph that can last but a little."

—WILLIAM GEORGE JORDAN.

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Spinsters from Choice

A YOUNG man went to inquire for rooms on Beacon Hill, the natural home of the spinster. He was received by a landlady of age and aggressive refinement, of whom he asked, standing before her in some awe: "Would it be possible for me to secure a room in your house, Mrs. Bronson?"

The lady, drawing herself up even higher, replied in haughty reproof: "Miss, sir! Miss—from choice!"

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You will find that the phrase, "from choice," indicates briefly the most visible step toward sex progress that women have made during our decade. We do not deny that great changes have been wrought in feminine thought and modes of living, but the progressive value, morally and mentally, of club life and other mental ostentation remains still an open question, loudly contested, but not as yet definitely settled in the minds of the majority.

But the balance of opinion is encouraging to the unmarried woman, who, nowadays, is frequently a resident in that state "from choice." Although, without doubt, she misses the best part of feminine life—that which is the same now as in the beginning and ever shall be, maternity—she has learned through what is known as emancipation the true value of work, than which there is no better substitute for romantic and maternal love.

Human beings were intended to go in pairs, but when for personal reasons one slips out of line into single file, he or she must have an absorbing thought other than self to goad his or her footsteps or there will be lagging behind in the great human procession. Single men seldom lag, because work is to them an understood necessity.

Emancipation is hardly the right word for the improved spinsterial condition, because it implies previous restraint, compulsion, bondage imposed by men—an absurd idea. Men have always been more willing to give women their head politically than women have been to take it.

Women have always been rulers; at present they are but extending their territory. The first step forward was made when they discovered that work was not degrading; that the Valley of Occupation led straight to the City of Content. Industry has borrowed the wings of happiness for transportation on earth. A woman can know single blessedness, but she must make it for herself and for others who will reflect the light she generates back upon her own life.

The historical old maids recorded as happy or interesting women were those who were always busy about something, even if they had no choice in the matter. With us, the woman is Miss or Mrs. from choice, and in that fact lies both moral and physical help for future generations.

The flaw in the new condition lies in its enticement for women of independent natures away from the marital experience; they hesitate to fly to evils they know of by reputation when their situation is at least bearable. But the law of attraction is sufficient unto itself; single blessedness, consequently, will hardly grow to over-balancing proportions.

Independence has not destroyed man's affectional capacity; neither need honest industry harden a woman's heart.

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The love that formerly was bestowed upon a parrot or a cat now seeks broader channels, and the parrots and cats are much better off for their own consequent independence. Warmed-over affection is not desirable.

The single woman has learned the necessity of living from without; not altogether from within. She mounts upon self, and stretches out her hands to the world. When those hands are full, her life is not empty; she has found the panacea for all human difficulties—work. Therefore, no woman need regret being an old maid "from choice."

A. F.

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Modern Side of an Old Boast

THERE was an anniversary a few days ago to which the world, in the course of centuries, has become so used that no one thinks of it any more. It was that of the birth of Augustus Cæsar, 961 years ago. His rule of Rome marked the city's proudest era, and it became his boast, as death drew near, that he had found Rome brick and left it marble.

The boast was a curious one. Augustus Cæsar might have laid claim to other imperial transformations which the world would have more quickly recognized as worthy. He might have said that he found Rome an Empire in possessions and men, and left it an Empire of letters. But the material boast, if not so easily approved, was yet a noble one.

To find a city brick and leave it marble; to stamp the home of thousands of fellow beings with a nobility and splendor it had not had before; to lift men's thoughts from the sordid and commonplace to the beautiful and majestic, from the makeshift and temporary to the architecturally lasting—this is high achievement. The poet, whose verse speaks for 500 years; the orator, whose eloquence bids a multitude pause; the painter, whose vision transferred to the canvas moves new generations—what have they to claim over him who finds a city brick and leaves it in lasting marble?

His works speak to every passer, to the illiterate, as well as to the student; his noble temple and sculptured gods are more constant inspiration than even verse can be. Love of home and pride of country are taught by stones as well as by men, since the history writ in marble is the easiest to read.

There is a peculiar pertinence to-day in this boast of an old Roman Emperor. American cities are entering upon a new stage of growth. The first essentials of city-hood have been obtained. The larger wealth and the higher municipal ideal are bringing about a change.

Our fathers left to us cities of brick, but we are changing them for our children into marble. What other is the principle that lies behind municipal art commissions, what other the ambition that leads to the adornment of streets and squares with statues and fountains, to the creation of beautiful parks and splendid boulevards? What is the Fairmount Park Art Association, in its two branches, but an Augustus Cæsar, created by the people themselves, for Philadelphia?

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If we could get the spirit of this ancient boast into individual hearts more often, we should do well. Now and then it does appear and its possessor is raised to greatness through its strength.

"A great city," said a Philadelphia paper on a sad occasion a few weeks since, "will be poorer for the death of Dr. William Pepper. His sudden, lamentable and irreparable loss removes from the active life of Philadelphia a man to whom, more than any other one person, is due the series of plans, movements and achievements by which this city has been given the institutions and opportunities demanded by one of the world's greatest municipalities, by its wealth, its population, its position, and its history."

There was a man whom Philadelphia loved, and whose civic spirit brought for him to-day an encomium akin to the boast of Cæsar. Opportunities are seldom so large as theirs, yet if we put asphalt where there was mud, a garden where there was bareness, or plant a vine on a naked wall, we shall soon be citizens of no mean city. The change from brick to marble is not merely a change from clay to stone.

—CHARLES M. ROBINSON.

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Letters to the Editor

Under this heading will be given weekly letters from readers on topics treated in the editorial columns of the POST. This will afford our readers an opportunity to discuss the subjects from all sides.

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Editor Saturday Evening Post:

Dear Sir: I have been reading your editorial on the impossibility and undesirability of ever attaining equality among men. I fully agree with you as far as you go, but there is a sense in which equality is both possible and desirable.

Equality of opportunity is necessary to produce the inequality which, as you truly say, is necessary to progress. For inequality of opportunity makes some men masters and some men slaves, and slavery produces equality and stagnation.

This distinction is what the writing of Henry George makes clear, and separates him completely from Edward Bellamy and all other nationalist and socialist writers. Judging from your remark, that all these schemes involve land nationalization, you class George with the rest. Land is opportunity; it is the base of all of man's opportunities, and to equalize access to land does not mean that men shall be equal, but that they shall have equal opportunity.

The great social unrest indicates the failure to recognize some fundamental social law. No scheme can cure it. Nothing but natural truth can do that. Mr. George has pointed out that truth. He invented it not; he only saw it and made it clear to others. He did indeed devise a scheme to conform our laws to the truth as he saw it, the practicability of which time will demonstrate.

Yours very truly, W. L. M.

Ann Arbor, Michigan, Oct. 21, 1898.

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Editor Saturday Evening Post:

My Dear Sir: I wish to make a brief and only suggestive reply to the editorial entitled, What Makes Life Worth Living?

True, we hear reformers cry "Equality! Equality!" and the glorious Declaration of Independence declares that "all men are created equal." I join with you in your protest against this dead-level of equality. If it really existed, life would indeed be very uninteresting. In the very nature of things, equality of all is utterly impossible.

But this is not what reformers mean, nor is it what the writer of the Declaration of Independence meant. What is meant is not equality, but equality of opportunity. With this as a universal base, all sorts of individuals could, would and should develop all grades of inequality.

I think you will readily agree that our present system does not give us equality of opportunity. Individuals with rare special talents are forced into occupations uncongenial, and mediocrities are given rare opportunities, and are, by force of circumstances, enabled to fill high positions in a very mediocre way.

There are many who believe that every child should be given a reasonably good education as a basis for a start in life. Our free school system is based upon that idea. We have the schools and we have the children, but there are defects in our social system that prevent the realization of the ideal intended. I cannot here suggest remedies. I only call attention to the fact that equality of opportunity is lacking.

I should be very much pleased, indeed, if you would follow the editorial referred to with one on this subject: "Equality of Opportunity." I am sure that you can treat it in a clear and forcible manner, and yet with a brevity that will not lead to weariness.

Very sincerely, C. F. T.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Oct. 23, 1898.

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Editor Saturday Evening Post:

When the writer of the editorial, The Man on the Desert Island, says that "a deadly blow will fall on militarism," he errs.

Of all European nations, the French are the most theatric. They are heartily enjoying this hubbub; their hatred of the Jews, and their insane adoration of the French soldier, are too deep, too much a part of their being, to be overthrown by such an amusing little curtain-raiser as the Dreyfus developments.

France herself is not at all disturbed. The changing ministries, the threatened resignation of Faure, the interference of Germany, are all parts of the comedy. The French people look on and applaud; at times they hiss the stage villain, but they are amused and diverted. Militarism in France cannot be overthrown by individual scandals.

Very sincerely, N. S. E.

Denver, Colorado, Oct. 19.

THE PERSONAL SIDE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST ACTORS

SOL SMITH RUSSELL

By

George Henry Payne

SOME time ago a number of gentlemen were sitting in the smoking compartment of a sleeping-car, when a mild-mannered, ministerial-looking man, who had smoked his cigar to the end, and had taken no part whatever in any of the open discussions between the others, quietly arose and went into a forward car.

"You know who that is?" asked one of the smokers of another.

"No; I didn't see him."

"That's the truest American actor."

That was several years ago, before I knew Sol Smith Russell. "Truest American actor" seemed then an odd criticism, but it showed that the speaker was expressing a guarded opinion, and one that went right down to the marrow of things.

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One cannot help liking that word "truest." It is rare in its application to an actor; it is rare in its application to any of the arts; but it fits, if any word fits, the peculiar quality of the acting that has made Sol Smith Russell famous for so many years.

All over the country, Mr. Russell is known, admired and looked up to. He has a following of a kind different from most actors. If you analyze his audiences, you will find they are of the kind that insist on sincerity above all other things; they want their humor wholesome, and not filtered through a cynical, pessimistic philosophy of life.

Mr. Russell has brought these audiences together; he has given them their ideal; they look to him to sustain the ideal, and they in turn hold him to it.

Some time ago one of the cleverest of the American playwrights, but one given to experimenting on dangerous ground, submitted to Mr. Russell a play just slightly tinged with the unhealthy atmosphere of modern French farces. The play was ably written; the character intended for Mr. Russell was an unusually strong part. The actor, keenly alive to the possibilities of the rôle, was much pleased, and read it to his wife.

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"But, Sol," asked Mrs. Russell, "what would your audiences say if they saw you in a character like that?" So that play was never produced by Sol Smith Russell.

The new school of Russian writers and musicians say of a man whose art is simple and sincere that he is "going to the people." Sol Smith Russell has always been going to the people. He keeps close to life in his plays; never obtrudes theories of art. In this he is like James Whitcomb Riley and the late Eugene Field. Field was one of the actor's most intimate friends, as Riley is to-day. The similarity in nature and in art between the actor and the Hoosier poet is so great that I once asked Mr. Russell to what extent, if any, he had been influenced by James Whitcomb Riley.

"Riley used to say he was influenced by me," was the reply with a quiet smile. This was only another way of saying that the actor was at work and reaping his reward before the poet had reached his present fame.

Those who know Sol Smith Russell will recognize in this modest simplicity of the man a characteristic of the actor. Mr. Russell "smiled," I said. I sometimes think that he is always smiling. Some of the most charming bits of his acting, those scenes that linger in one's memory, and that are always associated with simple, sincere, unpretentious characters, are mainly dependent on Sol Smith Russell's smile.

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In his recent play, A Bachelor's Romance, there is a scene that typifies as well as any scene in his repertoire the power of his smile. The young girl he loves is showing him how to dance, and he is sitting, almost clumsily, on the sofa, his hands on his knees, smiling in that quaint, contented fashion of his that is simply inimitable and irresistible. For that moment I don't think there is an unhappy person in the theatre. It was not what he says, for he says nothing—it isn't the play; it is that simple, unaffected smile, the key to the soul of David Holmes, and it is no exaggeration to say, the key to the soul of Sol Smith Russell.

His entire life is a progressive revealing of the man as he is to-day. It has been seemingly a training for the school of acting—or rather the kind of acting, for he belongs to no school—with which the public associates him. You have seen him as Noah Vale in A Poor Relation, as Hosea Howe in A Peaceful Valley, or David Holmes in The Bachelor's Romance, and you have noted, perhaps, that the humor is clean—it is that of the every-day life about you; it is, in a word, American. The pathos is drawn from unpretentious sources; it is quiet, yet effective; it is, briefly, true. That is his "kind" of acting. And this the training:

MRS. SOL SMITH RUSSELL

The town of Brunswick, Missouri, was an unassuming, somewhat uncouth place, the year Sol Smith Russell was born—in 1848. His father, then a young preacher, was studying to be a physician, and with this end in view he moved to St. Louis while Sol was very young. Sol Smith, the veteran manager and comedian, was the boy's uncle, and it was for him that he was named.

As a boy, Sol was muscular and tall, a trifle awkward with his long limbs, though it was not an ungraceful awkwardness. Those who knew him in those days testify to the same sweetness of temper and the same keen intelligence that marks the man of to-day.

Apropos of his long legs, it is told that when he was playing in Daly's Company his father came to see him. He had never seen his son act—in fact, he had not been in a theatre before for many years. Sol was playing the part of a tramp, and when, in making his first entrance, he stuck his foot through a window, the old gentleman cried out delightedly:

"There he is! That's Sol's leg! I'd know it anywhere!"

"I remember the first play I ever saw," said Mr. Russell quite recently. "It was shortly after we had moved to St. Louis, and I used the name of my then famous uncle to secure free admission. The play was called The Savage of the Rocks of Borneo. Blood-thirsty enough, wasn't it? I have never in all my life enjoyed a play with the same large, vigorous, all-absorbing enjoyment that I enjoyed that.

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"I went home determined that I, too, would impersonate The Savage of the Rocks of Borneo. Some of my companions and myself fitted up a stage in the cellar of the house, and the play was put in rehearsal—in a much garbled version, you may imagine, as my hazy memory of it had to be supplemented by my imagination and invention. But on the eve of the production, the boy who was to play the Christian maiden hit the boy who was to play the Indian Girl and the company was broken up. It was my first insight into the jealousies of stage life."

There were no more attempts at cellar reproductions of popular plays, but frequently young Russell would get some of his less pugnacious school-fellows together and give a minstrel show—a popular form of amusement in those days. The price of admission varied with the possessions of the would-be auditor, but it never went above the limit of a few coppers.

Shortly before the war broke out the Russell family had moved to Illinois, and there the patriotic fever aroused young Sol to the extent that he wanted to enlist. His parents would never give him the needed written consent, so he followed the Army as a drummer-boy.

"I drummed until I thought I had drummed sufficient valor into the soldiers' hearts, and then they started for the seat of war, leaving me at Cairo, Illinois, to fight my way to the theatrical front."

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The young patriot had been taken sick, but when he was well again he was offered employment as drummer in the small "orchestra" of the theatre at Cairo. Troops were arriving and departing from the place, and it was to these that the theatre looked for support. Young Russell showed that he could do more than drum. He could fetch a laugh and he could sing a comic song. The manager discovered this, and he was coaxed into the service.

"I was a little more than fourteen when I made my first appearance on the stage. 'First appearance on the stage' sounds rather funny, considering the circumstances. There was no nervousness, no trepidation, my talent was unquestioned, I was confident. And then the audience was almost entirely composed of soldiers, with whom one always felt on good terms. I played Pit-a-Pat, a negro girl, in The Hidden Hand, and I sang songs between the acts. They were mostly of a patriotic nature, and aroused great enthusiasm among the soldiers. They were sufficiently elastic in construction to admit of their being adapted to meet any current event. Thus, when General Grant captured Fort Pillow, I sang:

"'Fort Pillow, it is taken,
The rebels, they are shaken,' etc.

"The same words were used to Fort Donelson, and when Vicksburg capitulated I suppose I fairly screamed the up-to-date version."

During those times the youthful aspirant received $6.00 per week—some weeks. The soldiers paid their admission with sutlers' checks, and not infrequently, when a regiment had gone, the proprietors were left with nothing but a lot of pieces of brass. Those were the weeks that they entirely forgot to pay young Russell.

AS MR. VALENTINE
IN MR. VALENTINE'S CHRISTMAS

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One incident is always associated in Mr. Russell's mind with those early experiences, and throws light on his surroundings.

"Our wardrobe," said Mr. Russell, "was very scant, and an old calico coat that I had did service on every possible occasion—sometimes when I appeared as a servant in comedy, and sometimes in Shakespeare. One night I entered in Othello to announce a letter for Iago, and some cruel man in the audience shouted out: 'Ah, there comes the calico coat again!'

"I had a dim recollection that I felt very much hurt. For I was sensitive in those days—sensitive as an Æolian harp, and I took myself and my art quite seriously—and that calico coat was then very much a part of my beloved art, I can assure you!"

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Before the year was out he was playing repertoire parts, varying from timid village maidens to heavily bearded scoundrels, and as he was tall and looked much older than he was, he became an important member of the company—on one night madly pursuing the leading lady through five acts of villainy, and the next rescuing her from some equally aggressive member of the company.

"During the latter part of my engagement at Cairo, a manager, who gave performances with the aid of his family under a tent, came to me and said: 'I like your singing and your acting pretty well, and you tell a good Yankee story. Now, if you'll learn to walk a slack wire I can give you $8.00 a week to begin, and more later.'"

The tempting offer was accepted, but the actor failed to live up to his great opportunity; he did not become an accomplished slack-wire walker, and so was soon wandering from one company to another.

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"Before I was twenty an important event in my life happened," said Mr. Russell. "I came east with a company, and at Baltimore I saw Joe Jefferson act in comedy. The result was that I was given a new ambition. A new and powerful influence had entered my life. All my ideas of comedy had come from seeing performances such as were given in Cairo. Here was something different, something quieter, something more refined, something that appealed to me through its suppressed power. I felt the difference acutely, and I neglected no opportunity to study Jefferson at close range. His Pangloss especially appealed to me. I was fortunate, too, in

seeing John E. Owens, the great comedian, and William Warren while in Boston."

It was in the latter part of the sixties that Mr. Russell joined the stock company of the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, then under the management of Col. W. E. Sinn. He had but an ordinary school education, but he had become an omnivorous reader, and was developing an appreciation for rare character types. In the West he had been successful with a monologue entertainment, telling stories and giving imitations of peculiar people he met. He made his first hit in the East, in 1874, at the Olympic Theatre, New York, when he introduced in a play called The Wandering Minstrel some of these early specialties. For a season he was with Daly's company, and afterward for several years he traveled through the West, giving a monologue entertainment.

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This was the beginning of the Sol Smith Russell that is known to the people to-day. His study of character was beginning to bear fruits. The quaintly simple individual, the homely pathos and the quiet humor formed the principal part of his early efforts.

In addition to this, Mr. Russell, the man, began to see clearer what was before him. He had been studious, quiet and persevering. Without any of these characteristics changing, the man became intense, and people versed in the psychology of the actor will tell you that when the man's nature is intense his acting is broad and at the same time subtle.

Many of his friends had asked him why he did not star. He was anxious to do so; he had the confidence, but his talents were not suited to the ordinary comedy. J. E. Brown, of Boston, had written many monologue sketches for him, and in 1880 offered Mr. Russell a play written solely for him, in which the desired opportunity was given.

Edgewood Folks was the play, and for three years Mr. Russell made his appearance in the piece, laying the foundation for his present fame and fortune. In 1884, at the retirement of William Warren, one of his early idols, Mr. Russell was engaged to play his parts in the Boston Museum. Felix McCusick, Bewitched, and A Poor Relation were successful plays of his, but they did not satisfy him.

He had an "ideal" of his own in the matter of plays, and he spared no expense in searching for that "ideal." It was on this search that he came in contact with Dion Boucicault. The actor brought his family on from Minnesota, and, giving up all the comforts of home, spent an entire summer in New York in order that he might confer with the dramatist. The new play was called A Tale of a Coat, but it failed to meet with public approval, much to Mr. Russell's disappointment.

AS DOCTOR PANGLOSS
IN THE HEIR-AT-LAW

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"You see," said Mr. Russell speaking of this stage effort upon which he had staked his hopes, "Boucicault had made the play without any regard to the point of view of my audiences. He introduced a reporter into the play, and made him a rather low character, which caused the papers to attack it. I 'killed' the reporter, but even then it didn't go. I hated to give the play up, and so I gave it to Clyde Fitch to remodel, and the result was April Weather, a more successful play so far as I was concerned."

It was on seeing Mr. Russell play the rôle of Raphael Reed, in this revised version, that Clement Scott, the famous London critic, wrote: "A sunshine of greeting in London awaits so charming an actor and so pure and excellent a play. How much better it is to leave a theatre, not with a nasty taste in the mouth, but with a generous heart emptied of its tears and filled with renewed strength!"

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In his most recent play, A Bachelor's Romance, Mr. Russell has satisfied the more critical; he has not forsaken the pure and the cleanly, but he has fully shown that he possesses the broader art that friends long believed to be really his.

In the David Holmes of A Bachelor's Romance we have portrayed a character that differs but slightly from the real Sol Smith Russell. Kindly and courteous is the play's hero, and so is Mr. Russell, as every one who has met him will agree. The hero of the new play has his struggles and disappointments, but instead of making him hard, they have served only to bring out his constant genial nature with a new face.

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So it is with Russell, the man. His long struggle up to his present prosperity has neither hardened him nor made him flippant. Incessant work has rather mellowed his nature, and his financial success has enabled him to show the practical side to his "geniality."

AS BOB ACRES
IN THE RIVALS

Many an actor and actress could testify to the generosity of Mr. Russell in periods of storm and stress, but the great public hears little about the actor's charities. His nature is too sensitive to permit his kindliness to be used—in any way—as a means of advertising.

Sensitive—that is the nature of the man, and if you look into it you will find it is the backbone of the actor. Sometimes it comes in the form of pathos, as when, in April Weather, he arranges the folding-bed of the woman he is to make his wife, and "with the purity of a Galahad," places her children therein and takes from their lips the kiss she has given them. A shade darker in the acting and the scene would have been flat; a shade lighter and it might have been mere farce.

In his lighter vein his sensitiveness is equally subtle. I remember the first time I saw Mr. Russell, long ago. He held the stage in a scene in which he recited a poem portraying the troubles of two bashful lovers. As he went on he seemed to become as bashful as the lovers he was telling about; he became nervous, embarrassed; at one kissing episode you could almost swear he blushed; you began to feel embarrassed yourself—when the absurdity reached a climacteric point, and the house roared with laughter.

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Whether it be in the lighter or in the serious vein, you may be sure of one thing—his acting is always natural. It is realism of that peculiar realistic type that makes you feel that you know the man well after he has been on the stage five minutes. I once heard a little tot, returning from a matinée performance of A Poor Relation, say, "I 'd just like to hug that man."

In a city where fine homes are far from rare, Mr. Russell lives in a manner becoming and worthy of a man who has spent thirty years of his life at almost incessant work; thirty years, too, in a profession accredited with being full of temptations, and yet there is in Minneapolis to-day no man more respected and more admired than Sol Smith Russell. He is one of the city's leading citizens; he is numbered among her wealthiest and her most progressive men. With the coming of May each year he leaves the stage, and goes back to his home in the West to spend five months with his family.

In Mrs. Russell one sees the true complement of her husband. She is the daughter of the late William T. Adams, known to fame and every boy in the country as Oliver Optic. She is a New England woman, with all the qualities that make New England housewives justly famous.

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When Mr. Russell is playing in large cities, Mrs. Russell leaves her home and comes to him, so the two are rarely separated for any long period. The two children, a boy of seventeen, who is at the Lawrenceville Academy, and a girl of twelve, join Mr. Russell during the holidays. Not once since the children can remember have they been away from their father on Christmas Day. Mr. Russell maps out his tour for a year in advance, and so he was able to tell me that next year the "children and Mrs. Russell will spend Thanksgiving with me at Baltimore, and on Christmas they will come to visit me at New Orleans."

Mr. Russell's great fondness for children naturally centres itself in his own boy and girl; but it does not end there. In A Poor Relation he made one of his greatest hits with a bit of child-song. The first time he heard it was when his own Lilian sang it. During the last week of the theatrical season just closed the actor was in New York. He was busy from morning until night making the final arrangements for the coming season. I met him far down town one day leisurely walking toward a wig-maker's. He looked, as I have suggested, more like a member of the clerical than the theatrical profession, for he dresses in quiet fashion.

"Doing next season's work?" I asked.

"No; this is this season's work," he replied with a smile. Adding, with the affected air of an abused man: "My boy is going to appear in some amateur theatricals at school, and I'm going to get his wig."

Some time ago a splendid business block in Minneapolis owned by Mr. Russell was completely destroyed by fire, and it was said that, despite the insurance, the actor's loss was $70,000. Mr. Russell felt his misfortune keenly, and for some time was quite gloomy. When the company reached Troy, New York, there was a batch of letters awaiting him, and among them was one written the day after the fire by his daughter, who was then seven years old. It read as follows:

> "*Dear Papa:* I went down to see your store that was burned and it looks very pretty all covered with ice. Love and kisses from LILIAN."

Something in the child's point of view, the amusing simplicity and the love and tenderness, caused a new light to break on him, and "nobody ever went on the stage with a lighter heart than I did that night."

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We were sitting in the actor's dressing-room and he was telling of the interest with which he observed children. "I have a brother living out in Kansas City," he said. "His children are great favorites of mine, and I humor them to the best of my ability, of course. These children have been taught to repose absolute faith in the efficacy of prayer, and whenever they want anything very much—a sled, a doll, a cart, or anything of that kind—they ask for it in their prayers, and in due time the coveted article—the sled, the doll or the cart—always arrives.

"Well, one wretchedly cold day several winters ago I was in Kansas City, trudging along Main Street with my little niece, and she importuned me to buy her a box of candy. Finally, I told her I'd buy her the candy if she'd promise not to eat it until she got home. She agreed to this and I got her the pound of sweetmeats. As we proceeded on our way, I noticed that she kept her eyes fixed longingly upon the box of candy I carried under one arm, as if she were hypnotized. It was in vain that I sought to attract her attention to other objects. Presently she suggested in a suave and ingenious tone that we should run—she called it 'wun.' Of course, I detected in this suggestion an artful ruse to reach home quickly in order to dispatch the candy, and unwilling to sacrifice my personal comfort, as well as my personal dignity, to the dictates of that child's stomach, I replied: 'Oh, no, dear; it's better that we should walk.'

"'But,' urged the child, 'it is so told that it will do us good to wun.'

"'The pavement is very slippery,' said I impressively; 'we should certainly fall down and break our bones, my dear.'

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"The child hardly knew what to answer to this. She looked ruefully at me and then pleadingly at the box of candy. All at once a gleam of relief came over her distressed features. Stopping short in our walk, she put her two little hands up over her eyes and said in a reverent tone: 'Please, Lord Jesus, O, please make Uncle Sol wun!'

"It was not the Lord alone who heard that innocent prayer. What was I to do? But one thing, and that was to preserve that child's faith as best I could. The Lord answered that prayer instantly, for He put it into my heart to run. And run I did—never ran faster or more easily in my life. Taking that child by the hand, I started off like the wind, and through the crowd, up the hill, and over the icy pathway we sped swiftly and securely.

"No doubt people wondered what ailed that funny man with the child, but I didn't care. I was helping to answer a prayer just then, and when we reached home I was glad—yes, in spite of my exhaustion and demoralized condition. I was heartily glad that I had been an instrument in strengthening that little one's faith.

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"'You couldn't he'p you'se'f, could you, Uncle Sol?' asked my niece, as she sat in the big armchair feasting upon caramels. 'Dod made you wun, didn't He, Uncle Sol?'

"'Of course He did, my darling,' said I, and I spoke truly, for at the time I thought He did.

"Very often I get some 'bit' of simplicity for the stage, or some little 'by play' of tenderness, if you would call it that, just by watching children."

It is these "bits of simplicity" that make the actor as strong as he is. They come from long study of, and sympathy with, the simple character, but make no mistake—behind that study and sympathy is a fine intelligence. Notice how he shows you "the poor relation"—humility, a slight awkwardness, yet withal a striking nobility. You see that there is no horseplay in his humor; that there is truth in his pathos. How quietly and simply poor shabby Noah Vale gathers the little children about him and tells them of a fine dinner that is very far in the future; dwells on the amount of delicious gravy there will be, and the sweetmeats—hopefully smacking his lips the while. And note the audience, how breathlessly it listens to every word, and how the men smile in a quiet way, and how the eyes of the women moisten with tears of sympathy.

That is the magnetism of the man.

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Or take his picture of a literary man, young in years, though grown old by secluding himself from the world. His absent-minded manner, the awkward way he receives visitors to his "den," his sending "hobby-horses" to his ward, and then his blank amazement when he finds that ward is quite a young lady. How simply the apparently dried-up bookworm shows that there is a tender, loving heart hid by all his erudition; how gently he covers over the sleeping girl and tiptoes his way out of the room.

The five vacation months that Mr. Russell spends off the stage is not a period of idleness. He has a library of some five thousand volumes, most of which show a studious interest in the stage, and much of his "recreation time" is spent there. He has the passion for the rod, and at intervals he is off to the lakes to enjoy a week's fishing.

AS PETRUCHIO
IN TAMING OF THE SHREW

Of the actor's many notable friends, those that best show his character are Joseph Jefferson and the late Eugene Field. The former has shown his great admiration of Mr. Russell's acting by giving him special prompt-books for his own Bob Acres and Doctor Pangloss.

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Among actors Mr. Russell has a wide popularity. It is not his charity, it is his courteous and kind attention, the "attention" that William T. Adams called that "of the Christian gentleman." And that is what Sol Smith Russell is, on the stage or off.

There is no more trying time for an actor than the rehearsal of a new play. "And yet," said a former member of his company to me, "at rehearsal Mr. Russell is as kind-hearted and as even-tempered as most of the characters he portrays on the stage."

There is a question that we are all interested in—the tendency of the drama. An opinion from this man is valuable.

"I see a light breaking," Mr. Russell recently said, "on the future of the drama. The people are tired of the farce, and of silly, vulgar plays. They demand something pure and simple, and the best theatres are giving it to them. I see old people in the audiences now who have not, I fancy, gone for years before. The public—the better part of it—wants good plays, and it is willing to pay for them. One proof of this I see in the audiences my plays attract because of these qualities. The theatres are attaining caste. The highest produces only good plays. One good play succeeds another. A good play is not followed by a vulgar show, as was the case not long ago. The actors are striving to get into the companies that play only the first caste of theatres, so that the drama is produced more seriously and carefully even in the lower-caste houses.

AS DAVID HOLMES
IN A BACHELOR'S ROMANCE

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The actors are doing their part; the public appreciates it; neither deserves all the credit. It is history being repeated; such revival has been experienced before. Some really good plays are being written to-day. We are approaching a classic era in stage literature. The rewards of dramatic authorship are so great that the best minds are attracted to it. With all the refinement of our day, it would be strange if we could not produce literature superior to that of the old centuries. The stage will get the best revised thought."

In every man's life there is a keynote. At times it appears lost, but it always comes again, and all his worth is built upon it. The keynote of Sol Smith Russell's life? The public might guess it from the actor. On the stage he is the soul of simplicity; and he has always presented pure drama. Off the stage you will find the man consistent. His love of children, his devotion to his family, those reunions—"Thanksgiving at Baltimore; Christmas at New Orleans"—his love of books, the devotion to the art of Isaak Walton, his friendships—everything accords.

PUBLICK OCCURRENCES That are Making HISTORY

Testing the New Armor for the Navy

The recent ballistic test at the naval proving station near Washington of an armor plate made under the new Krupp process, was pronounced by American and European experts the most important one ever made in the United States, and one of the severest on record.

It established the fact beyond the possibility of controversy that the new plate was far superior to any in existence anywhere. The result of the test will be an important and thorough revolution in the systems of protecting war vessels with armor, by providing plates of greatly reduced thickness, with resisting qualities equal to the best in any Navy.

The plate tested was little less than twelve inches thick of the usual length and breadth and with the customary backing. At a distance of 300 feet a new naval twelve inch gun fired three armor piercing projectiles at velocities of 1813, 2022 and 1720 feet per second. The first penetrated the plate only eight and a half inches, the second went entirely through it, and the third entered about five inches only. It is quite certain that the armor for our new battleships and coast defense monitors will be made by the new process, for it has proven its value.

The French Cabinet and the Dreyfus Case

The decision of the French Cabinet in favor of a revision of the trial of ex-Captain Dreyfus was the most signal triumph of Henri Brisson, the Premier of France, in his long and exciting public career. He fairly wrung the decision from his associates, in the face of the intense opposition of the Army, the President of the Republic, and a large part of the populace of Paris. Almost in a day the shouts of the multitude changed from denunciations of Dreyfus, Zola, the Jews and Brisson to loud acclamations for Brisson and revision.

The Cabinet knew full well that, whichever way they decided, they would assume a grave responsibility, and whatever the result of their choice may be, it was the one best calculated to meet the approval of lovers of justice and fair play the world over.

Not only the Government but the people had been led much nearer to a great national calamity than was generally known, and more than once a declaration of war by Germany was imminent. Because of the Dreyfus case, France has stood between the dangers of domestic revolution and war with her great enemy for four years, and each day's developments have increased the mysteries of this most celebrated

Saving the Ships of Admiral Cervera's Fleet

Naval Constructor Hobson has again distinguished himself by raising the Spanish armored cruiser Maria Theresa after the head of a professional wrecking company had declared such a feat impossible. This success gave much encouragement to a greater ambition.

Ever since the destruction of Cervera's fleet Constructor Hobson has been anxious to raise the Cristobal Colon, the mightiest vessel of the fleet. After several weeks spent in experimenting the Navy Department ordered a cessation of his work despite his protest. The raising of the Maria Theresa, however, was so gratifying to the Department that it instructed him to resume work on the Colon, and also to attempt the salvage of the Reina Mercedes. These three vessels would prove a most valuable addition to our Navy, and the hope is freely expressed that their original names will be preserved as a glowing inspiration for our naval heroes of the future.

Great Britain's Scheme for Pensioning Her Old People

The attempt to provide a scheme for pensioning old people in England has met with failure. It originated with Joseph Chamberlain, was then taken up by the Conservative Government, and was made an issue in the elections of 1895. An influential committee was appointed to consider all plans laid before it whereby the working classes could be encouraged to make provision for old age, by State aid or otherwise. Fully one hundred schemes were suggested, but these were soon reduced to nine by the committee.

The one that received the largest attention was suggested by Sir Spencer Wolcole, a member of the committee. This proposed that every person of sixty-five years of age who had half a crown a week of assured savings should receive another half crown from the local authorities half the cost to be paid from local taxation and half from the Imperial treasury. In its report the committee declared that any pension scheme, under the limitations of its inquiry, would affect a comparatively small part of the community and exclude the really destitute, and that it was unable to devise any proposition free from grave disadvantages.

New Opportunities for American Investment

Arguments are being advanced by a class of political economists to show that the domestic field for the profitable employment of American capital is now fully occupied, and that for money to make money it must seek opportunities elsewhere.

This view was doubtless quickened by a sentiment that pervaded the entire National Bankers' Association at the annual convention held early last summer, that the days of the seven per cent. investment had passed, and that financial concerns would have to be contented with a maximum return of three per cent. or

Certainly, there is much to sustain this view. The General Government had no difficulty in floating a large three per cent. loan, State and Municipal Governments and railroad and other large corporations have successfully replaced high interest bonds with new ones which come close to the three per cent. rate.

With millions on millions now lying idle in bank vaults, it would not be difficult to float a gilt-edged loan on a two-and-a-half or even a two per-cent. rate. Under these conditions it is deemed Providential that abundant "opportunities elsewhere" have been developed in Cuba, Porto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippine Islands.

Nine Months Under the Reign of Prosperity

At the end of the third quarter of the current year the material interests of the United States maintained the steady advancement that has been noted from time to time in these columns. Indications were strong that the full year would show a great general activity in all lines of business than any twelve months in the preceding twenty years, not excepting the unusually large transactions of 1892. The best feature of the situation was that we grew, manufactured, and sold in the markets of the world an enormous surplus over our own necessities.

Our sales exceeded our purchases upward of $600,000,000. The value of staple crops, other produce, and live stock reached the great figure of $5,116,000,000. Of agricultural products alone we exported a gross value of $871,000,000, the largest single year total on record.

Prime stocks continued to command good prices, and the bulk of sales was for permanent investments, a larger proportion than usual going to London. The increase in railroad earnings kept up in response to more prudential management and to economical consolidations. Money became easier and more abundant, and failures less frequent.

How the Nation Spends Its Vast Income

The official list of appropriations by the recent session of Congress shows a total of $893,231,615 for all regular and special purposes. As indicative of the cost of carrying on the Government of more than 75,000,000 people, the amounts set apart for the principal services have a special interest just now, when the world is closely studying everything American. For the promotion of our great agricultural industry there was allotted the sum of $1,509,202, for the maintenance of our widely diffused postal system, $99,222,300; and for the relief of our pensioners—the largest regular individual amount of all—$141,233,830.

Our diplomatic service costs $1,752,208; our legislative, $21,625,846; our Army, $23,193,392; and our Navy, $56,098,783. The fixed or permanent appropriations aggregate $217,836,220. We set apart the large sum of $361,859,927 to enable the President to intervene in the affairs of Spain, in the interest of humanity and civilization, giving him all the money it was thought he would want to the end of the year. That our Navy might be strengthened for any future emergency we also agreed to a future expenditure of nearly $25,000,000 for it.

Prevention the Best Cure for our Criminals

It has long been the belief of humanitarians and students of penology that a large percentage of criminals would reform if opportunity were provided to secure them respectable employment. Much has been attempted on this belief, and yet the results are far from decisive. Some recent investigations throw light on the subject, but leave it as far from settlement as ever.

It is found that the average age of over eighty thousand criminals in American penal institutions is under thirty one, nearly one-half under thirty, about a third under twenty-five, and nearly one-eighth under twenty. It is also found that the average age of American paupers is fifty-seven.

From these facts it is argued that as a rule the professional criminals are young persons that because it is easier for young people to secure employment than older ones, for young people are driven into crime by hard times; and that therefore a possible majority are bred to crime. This inference would indicate that the real reformatory period preceded the commission of the first crime, and leaves open the question: Where and how can reform be begun?

More Than a Fifth of the Country at School

A preliminary statement by William T. Harris, LL.D., United States Commissioner of Education, covering the school year is particularly valuable as showing unlimited prosperity of the elementary schools. In a single year the gain of pupils was more than a quarter of a million increasing the enrollment to almost fifteen and a half millions in this grade alone.

Coming with the elementary the higher grades, represented in universities, colleges, high schools and academies, it is found that more than sixteen and a quarter millions of children and young men and women are daily reaping the many and varied advantages of our educational system.

More significant still is the fact that one fifth of the entire population of the country are enrolled in some institution of elementary and advanced learning. It is also pleasing to be informed that while the standard has been raised to such an extent as to require an average of a year's work more in preparation for the freshman class, the number of students in universities and colleges more than doubled in the year, reaching 1216 in the million of population.

Success of Prohibition in the Dominion of Canada

For the first time in its history the entire Dominion of Canada has voted on the question of prohibition. Never before was this question submitted to the people of so large a territory. During the last few years several of the provinces have taken a plebiscite separately.

When the present Liberal Government came into power, the prohibitionists petitioned for a general vote, and the Government granted the opportunity, but without pledges of its future action. The question as submitted was as follows:

> "Are you in favor of the passing of an Act prohibiting the importation, manufacture or sale of spirits, wine, ale, beer and cider, and all other alcoholic liquors for use as beverages?"

The returns indicated a light general vote, a majority for prohibition of less than twenty thousand, a prohibition majority in all the provinces excepting Quebec, and an anti-prohibition majority in that province of about forty thousand. Under the small general majority political reasons are likely to deter the Government from prohibitory legislation.

A Death Blow to Reform in China

The really beneficent intentions of the Emperor of China toward his people had scarcely been promulgated when he was suddenly thrust aside by a dynastic revolution, which already may have culminated in his secret assassination. In the struggles immediately preceding his downfall, there is no room for doubt that he personally preferred the ascendency of the British influence, but Russian intrigue and native treachery accomplished his ruin.

Official classes in China opposed him, the Dowager Empress forced him to relinquish the Imperial power to her, his [illegible] national reform were stilled at the [illegible] and those most concerned were [illegible] advancement of the Empire became [illegible] subjects of the executioner. Nearly [illegible] dent with his reform edicts was an attempted alliance of the Empire with Japan. This was more than the official classes could tolerate. The Emperor saw the approaching crisis and hastened a confidential messenger for European aid to save both Emperor and Empire, but his enemies moved the quickest.

Friendly Relations With Canada Assured

Considering the progress made in the discussion of the twelve original questions submitted to the Joint High Commission on the interlaced interests of the United States and Canada, it is deemed certain that a complete report, together with the draft of a treaty, will be ready for the Senate when Congress meets in December. A basis of agreement has been reached on nearly all of the questions, and it is the general belief of the Commissioners that the proposed treaty will be acceptable to both the United States and the British Governments.

What is of more immediate concern to the people of the United States, is the declaration of the American Commissioners that there is no cause for apprehension that the settlement of the questions in controversy [illegible] way disturb our industrial system [illegible] our great industries will be sacrificed, only such changes will be made in tariff [illegible] will insure a more perfect reciprocity.

American Victories Claimed for the Cubans

Every intelligent person is supposed to know by this time that the termination of Spanish sovereignty in Cuba was due wholly to the acts of the Army and Navy of the United States on and about the island. As a fact, this is conceded by the Spaniards themselves. Yet, the recent address of President Masso, of the Cuban Republic, to the Cuban Army, announcing the end of the war, credits that Army with the supreme influence.

Of the result he says, there is no need to say whose is the victory, because, as there remain Cubans in existence, success cannot belong to Spain. He credits the people of the United States with valuable aid prior to and during the war, calls them "our ally of yesterday, our host of to-day (!), our friend always"; declares that the Army of the Revolution deserves the boundless gratitude of the Cuban Republic, and proclaims that as the Cubans at last have a country of their own, that country becomes sovereign in the enjoyment of its independence.

The Alaska Boundary Dispute Still Undecided

Considerable alarm has been developed in this country lest the American members of the Joint High Commission of the United [illegible] Great Britain and Canada should [illegible] cession of a part of Alaska to [illegible]. The vexed question of the boundary [illegible] it is acknowledged, has been before the [illegible] mission but it is not one of those which substantial progress has been reported.

It should be remembered that both the United States and the Dominion authorities have employed surveying parties to definitely mark the lines laid down in the treaties between the United States and Great Britain, and between Russia and Great Britain, and that, less than a year ago, the United States and Great Britain executed a new treaty for a joint commission to determine the exact limits of the territory ceded to the United States by Russia in 1867.

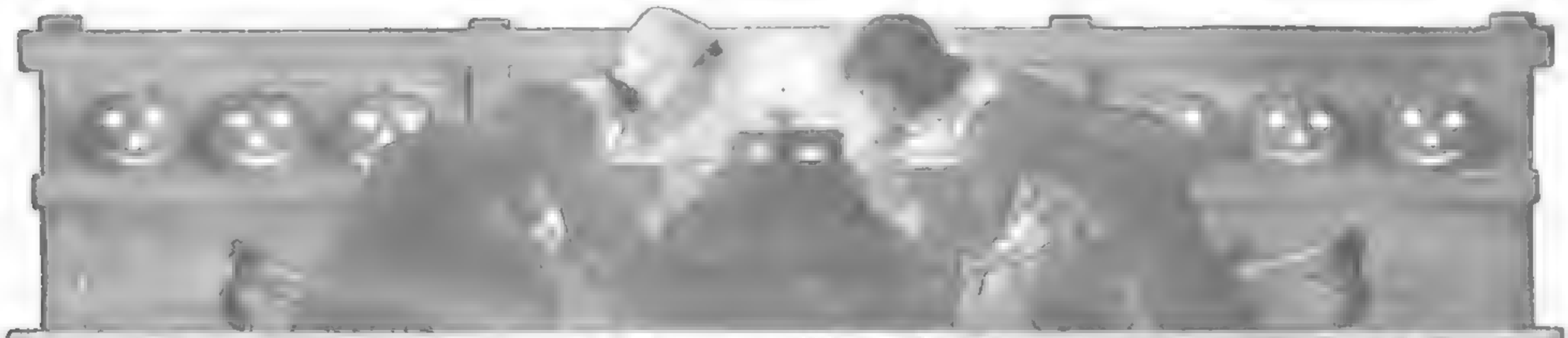
The [illegible] commission has not yet [illegible] its re[illegible] for the Joint High Commission to make an agreement without first seeing them.

Consolidating Three Central American Republics

The three small republics, Honduras, Nicaragua and Salvador, which have been endeavoring for more than a year to form the United States of Central America, have reached the state of acute dissension which the Post last summer showed to be quite imminent and a probable barrier against permanent union.

The delegates to the convention for framing a constitution and code of laws have claimed supreme power, and ignored the Diet of The Greater Republic of Central America which appointed them. They still insist on withholding the constitution from a popular vote.

The constitution and laws, as prepared and adopted by the delegates, provide that the Government shall consist of a President, four Senators and thirteen Representatives from each State, and three Senators and four Representatives from the Federal District, elected for four years. The President is not to be reelected, nor can any present President of a State be a candidate for the [illegible]idency while holding the State office. The temporary capital will be Amapola, in Honduras. Federal elections will be held December 1 next, and the new Government inaugurated March 1, 1899.



OLD-TIME HALLOWEEN CUSTOMS

DECORATION BY J. C. [illegible]

[illegible] perhaps, no [illegible] which the popular [illegible] is stamped with more peculiar character than the evening of October [illegible] All Hallowe'en or Hallow

It is clearly a relic of pagan times dates back thousands of [illegible] according to the belief of [illegible] tors, the fairies hold high [illegible] on the closing night of October when the sun god [illegible] drawing his warmth from the earth There is nothing in the church observance of the ensuing days of All Saints to [illegible] rise to any such extraordinary notions as are [illegible] with this celebration to [illegible] such remarkable practices [illegible] by which it is distinguished

Although our forefathers brought over from Europe many of the customs and beliefs of Hallowe'en, it is not as widely celebrated in America as in parts of Great Britain

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The leading idea respecting Hallowe'en is that it is the time of all others [illegible] night influences prevail [illegible] for a universal walking abroad of spirits, both of the visible [illegible] world and other good or evil

The witches are especially [illegible] their witchery on this night [illegible] be the custom for the master of the household, on Hallowe'en, to [illegible] straw, fired, about his corn crib, singing

"Fire and reek
Light on my true love's back
This fire straw was meant to ward off witchcraft, and so preserve the corn from being spoiled. In Scotland, on Hallowe'en the red end of a fiery stick is waved about in mystic figures in the air to accomplish the same spell

Red appears to be a [illegible] peculiarly obnoxious to witches. One Hallowe'en rhyme enjoins the employment of

"Rowan tree and red [illegible]

that is, dance till they fall down and expire The berries of the rowan tree (mountain ash) are of a brilliant red The point of the fiery stick waved rapidly takes the appearance of red thread

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In Lancashire it was formerly believed that on this night witches assembled to do "their devilment without a name" at their general rendezvous in the forest of Pendle where was a ruined and desolate farmhouse, known as the Malkin Tower from the awful purposes to which it was devoted

This superstition led to a ceremony called "lating," or, perhaps "[illegible]etting," the witch's [illegible] loved that if a lighted candle were carried about the fields or huts from seven to twelve o'clock at night, and burned all that time steadily it had so far triumphed over the evil [illegible] might safely defy their malice during the season

If by any accident the [illegible] the experiment [illegible] deemed inauspicious to cross the threshold of that [illegible] habitation

Other characteristics of Hallowe'en that on this night the immaterial [illegible] may detach itself from [illegible] the world at [illegible] to attain its highest [illegible] asserted by [illegible] power of calling [illegible] very deep" [illegible] available to [illegible] who chose to avail themselves of the privileges which [illegible] to be granted on this occasion

•

It was a custom in Ireland, when the young women would know if their lovers are faithful, [illegible] nuts upon the bars of a grate [illegible]

[illegible] proved faithful to [illegible] as regard for the person making the trial If the nuts named after the [illegible] and her lover burn together they will be married

There [illegible] custom still prevalent in Scotland as the [illegible] Hallowe'en ceremony of pulling [illegible] kail-stocks, or stocks of [illegible] people [illegible] hand [illegible] kailyard or [illegible] and each [illegible] stalk which [illegible] to meet [illegible]

They then [illegible] carry the fire [illegible] to inspect their prizes [illegible] according as the stalk is big or [illegible] or crooked [illegible] shall be the [illegible] partly by whom [illegible] orth sticking [illegible] count of fortune [illegible] and the taste of the pith indicates the temper [illegible] Finally the stalks are placed, one after another [illegible] over the door and the Christian names of the people [illegible] shortly after to enter the house are [illegible] in the same [illegible] to indicate those of the individuals whom the parties are to marry

Another ceremony much practised on Hallowe'en is that of the Three Dishes or [illegible] Two of these are respectively filled with clean cold water, and one is empty They are arranged on the hearth, when the parties, blindfolded, advance in succession [illegible] [illegible] or [illegible] If also the [illegible] with [illegible] dips it into the empty dish the person is destined to end his days on earth [illegible] a bachelor or an old maid

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Another of these, what may perhaps be termed unallowed rites of Allhallow [illegible] is to wet a shirt sleeve, hang it up to the fire to dry, and then in bed watching it till midnight, when the apparition of the individual future partner for life will enter the room exactly at midnight, and carefully turn the sleeve over as if endeavoring to dry it

A very beautiful custom, but one which is dangerous to health, is that whereby the young maiden desirous of seeing her future husband goes to the wood at midnight, and gazes in the pool If fortune be with her, her lover will peep over her shoulder, and she will see his face plainly mirrored in the water [illegible] Many [illegible] originated from the fact that the [illegible] mound near the pool in the [illegible] favorite trysting place and [illegible] spirit of the man could separate from the body it would probably visit the favorite haunt and appear to the waiting [illegible] But, of course, all the conditions must be favorable

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Hallowe'en is the [illegible] night of the year in which nuts and apples figure in the celebrations [illegible] who are troubled by no thought [illegible] delight to "bob" for apples in a tub of water One game is to hang a stick horizontally by a string from the ceiling [illegible] on one end is an apple, on the other a lighted candle The stick is set twirling, and the apple must be bitten The danger is that the stick revolves so rapidly that one may bite into the candle; but the risk only increases the interest of the game, and makes the frantic efforts of a person to catch the apple more laughable

[illegible] has [illegible] two lovers, and wishes to know which one will be the most constant, she should take two brown appleseeds, or pippins, and stick one on each cheek after each has been named after a lover. Then she repeats this couplet

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

and patiently waits until one falls, when the unfortunate swain whose name it bore is instantly discarded as being [illegible]

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In certain parts of England a cake is made for every one in the family, whence this [illegible] called by them "Cake Night." In the northern part of Wales it is the custom upon All Saints' Eve to make a great fire called "Coel Coeth Most every family builds a great bonfire in the most conspicuous spot near the house and sits about it for an hour at the dead of night

As the fire dies down, each member of the family writes his or her name on a great white stone, and throws it into the ashes. Then they say their prayers, take several turns around the dying fire, and go to bed. As soon as they rise in the morning they hasten out to the bed of ashes, and each one searches for the stone bearing his name Should any one be lacking it is believed that the person who threw it into the ashes will die before the coming of another All Saints' Eve

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The custom of building bonfires on Allhallow Eve seems to be quite widespread in England In some places, when a bonfire is consumed, the ashes are collected into the form of a circle, and on the circumference of the circle are placed the marked stones

There are many ceremonies carried on while this fire is burning, such as running through the

SHE WILL SEE HIS FACE PLAINLY MIRRORED IN THE WATER

fire and smoke, running in mystic figures to escape the short-tailed sow, throwing nuts into the fire, and so forth. According as these nuts burn brightly or blacken and crack they betoken the prosperity or the misfortune of the owner.

Another custom is to steal out of the house unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp seed. After it is sown, harrow it with anything which can be conveniently drawn after one. During this process of harrowing, repeat, now and then,

"Hemp seed I sow thee, hemp seed I sow thee,
And him (or her) that is to be my true love, come after me and kiss me."

Look over your left shoulder, and you will see the person invoked in the attitude of pulling hemp. Or, if this fail to give the desired result, steal out unnoticed to the hay-stack. Walk around it three times, and on the last stride of the last time around you will catch in your arms your future life-partner.

"Allan Day," as it is termed, is the day of days to hundreds of children, who would deem it a great misfortune were they to go to bed on Allan night without the time-honored Allan-apple to hide beneath their pillows.

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To the more religiously inclined, Allhallow Eve is given over to preparation for the festival which occurs on the day following. In the seventh century the Pantheon of Rome was converted into a place of Christian work, and dedicated by Pope Boniface IV to the Virgin and all the Saints. Thenceforth the day was set apart to commemorate All Saints. Probably at that time fires were lighted upon the hill on All Saints' Night, from the fact that fire has always been an emblem of immortality, and typical of the ascent of the soul to Heaven.

Burns, in his notes on Hallowe'en, gives the following interesting account of some of the old superstitious customs practiced by the Scottish peasantry:

Steal out all alone to the kiln and darkling throw into the pot a clue of blue yarn; wind it in a new clue off the old one. Toward the latter end, something will hold the thread; demand: "Who hauds?" i. e., who holds. An answer will be returned from the kiln-pot by naming the Christian and surname of your future spouse.

At midnight take a lighted candle and go alone to a looking-glass, eat an apple before it, and some traditions say you should comb your hair all the time, and then the face of your future conjugal companion will be seen peeping over your shoulder.

In the reign of Charles I, of England, the young gentlemen of the Middle Temple were accustomed at Allhallows tide to associate themselves for the festive objects connected with the Christmas season, which they believed began on this day.

In 1629 they chose Bulstrode Whitelocke as Master of the Revels, and used to meet at St. Dunstan's Tavern, in a large room called "The Oracle of Apollo," each man bringing friends with him at his own pleasure. It was a kind of mock Parliament, where various questions were discussed. But these temperate proceedings were seasoned with mirthful doings, to which the name of revels was given, and of which dancing was the chief feature.

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On Allhallow Day the Master entered the hall, followed by sixteen revellers. They were fine young fellows, clothed in rich garments, with hats and great feathers. Then began the old masques, after which they danced the Brawls, and then the Master took his seat, and all engaged in round and country dances till the night was far spent.

As might be expected, the reputation of this dancing soon spread, and ladies and gentlemen of high rank participated. Court ladies and grandees joined the merry dancers, and soon the populace of London were striving for places merely to see the festivities.

To crown the ambition and vanity of all, a great German lord expressed a desire to witness the revels. The Templars entertained him at great cost to themselves, and received in exchange his avowal: "Dere was no such nople college in all Christendom as deirs."

Some years ago Queen Victoria took part in a Hallowe'en celebration at Balmoral. At night she and Princess Beatrice, each bearing a large torch, drove out in an open phaeton. A great bonfire was lighted and a figure dressed as a hobgoblin appeared leading the effigy of a witch. With appropriate ceremonies the witch was tossed in the fire and consumed; and then all the country folk joined in a dance, to music furnished by Her Majesty's piper.

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Hallowe'en, as a festal occasion, seems to be enjoying a revival. Fashionable gatherings are held, and many old customs practiced. Its history is lost in antiquity. It is a relic of times when fashion was little thought of; when the world, while less advanced, was more natural than now. It does us all good to get nearer to some of the old homely games of our childhood, when Jack-o'-lanterns were the most alarming creatures ever made, when bobbing for apples gave the keenest delight, when a kiss stolen from half-willing lips was a priceless treasure.

THE BEST POEMS IN THE WORLD

XXXVII

THE COURTIN'

By JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

With a Drawing by Emlen McConnell

GOD makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur 'z you can look or listen;
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side,
With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

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The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole Queen's arm thet Gran'ther Young
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clean grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton,
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd spunked it with full twenty gels,
Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hundred ring,
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upon it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
She seemed to 've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

•

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtful o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal—no—I come dasignin'"—
"To see my ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean yes an' say no
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye, nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call again";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister";
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An'—wal, he up an' kist her.

•

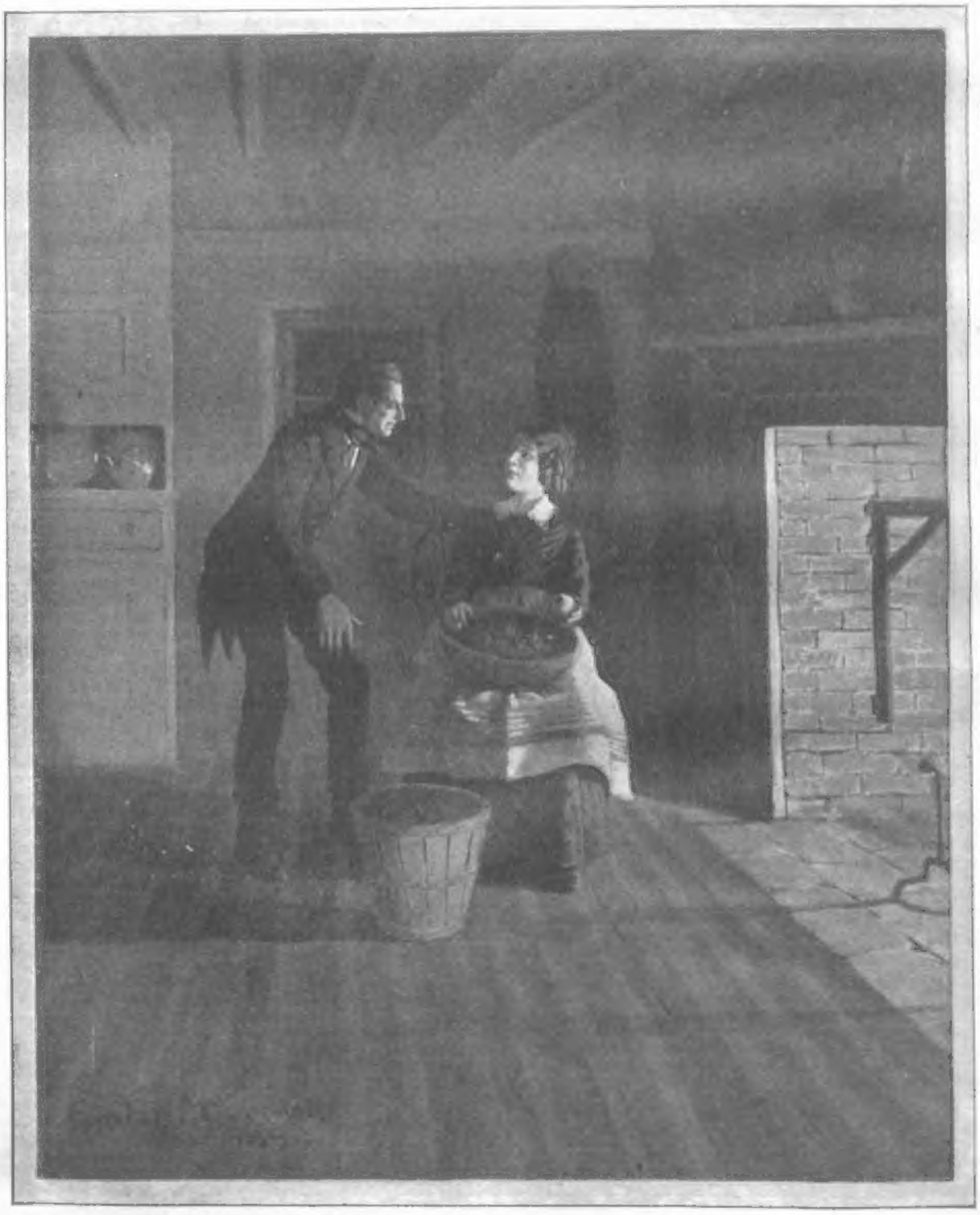
When ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
And gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

SAYS HE, "I'D BETTER CALL AGAIN"; SAYS SHE, "THINK LIKELY, MISTER"



The New Premier of Japan, Count Okuma A new figure has recently stepped upon the stage of international politics. It is the new Premier of Japan. He is to the progressive little Yankee nation of the far East what Li Hung Chang is to China, and more. He represents the people.

This man, Count Shigenobu Okuma, has won the admiration and respect of the people and the unbounded confidence of his ruler. Although he is sixty years old, he considers himself a young man. He lives in the suburbs of Tokio, in a house that is a picturesque combination of the modern and the ancient Japanese dwelling. The front rooms are carpeted, papered and furnished in modern style, while the rear sections have the Japanese porches and paper windows.

Count Okuma is a patron of learning as well as a progressive statesman. Opposite his house he has erected a college and endowed it with $100,000. His son is a graduate of Princeton University, who returned to Japan to manage the college founded by his father.

Under Okuma's premiership Japan will undoubtedly enter upon a broader and more enlightened political life. The system of clan government has been overthrown, and the people are now assured of representation in their Government. The quiet, unpretentious progressiveness of Japan is in marked contrast to the stormy times through which her big neighbor, China, is passing.

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The Romantic Career of Victorien Sardou Victorien Sardou, whose most recent production, Pamela, a comedy, is winning such favorable criticism, has just passed his sixty-seventh birthday. Sardou desired to be a physician, and studied medicine, but was compelled to abandon it and give lessons in history, philosophy and mathematics.

When he was twenty-three years old he wrote his first comedy, which was an absolute failure. He soon reached a state of abject poverty and extreme distress. He was living in a garret, and was prostrated by an attack of typhoid fever; but a neighbor, Mdlle. de Brécourt, nursed him with tender care, and he married her soon after he recovered.

His wife introduced Sardou to Mdlle. Déjazet, who had just established a theatre, and Sardou set to work on dramatic composition, and quickly built for himself a brilliant reputation. Nine years later he possessed fame and fortune, but misfortune came in the death of his wife.

Sardou has continued to turn out dramatic compositions at a rapid rate, and has realized a princely fortune from his pen. He has built a splendid château at Marly-le-Roy, France, is a prominent member of the French Academy, and has been decorated with the cross of the Legion of Honor.

Pamela is one of his most brilliant creations, although it has not achieved the success of Sans Gene. It deals with the escape of the unfortunate child King, Louis XVII, who, instead of perishing in the Temple, is set at liberty by a band of devoted Loyalists.

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The Serious Side of Mark Twain We all know that our inimitable Mark Twain has his serious side, but few of us realize how desperately serious that side is. Carlyle Smythe gives us a good view of the serious humorist in the Pall Mall Magazine. He says:

"I shall not be guilty of any indiscretion in saying that Mr. Clemens not infrequently feels the rôle of humorist intolerably irksome, and further, that he would prefer to be remembered by his more serious works than by those purely humorous. Probably, if a plebiscite of his admirers were taken, a huge majority of votes would be cast in favor of Huck Finn as Mark Twain's masterpiece.

"That is my own opinion. In any case, The Prince and the Pauper and Joan of Arc would not stand high on the poll, yet they are favorites of their author. This marked and peculiar preference has always appeared to me a positive indication of the basic seriousness of Mr. Clemens' temperament. Indeed, very often the suspicion is provoked among those who know him intimately that his antic disposition is largely assumed, and that fundamentally the author of The Innocents Abroad is a sedate savant who has been seduced from the paths of high seriousness by a fatal sense of the ridiculous.

"His tastes certainly seem to support this view. He is no musician, although a fervid lover of music; but beyond a strong and natural affection for the simple negro melodies of his native land, his taste runs to Wagner. He once told me that he would walk twenty miles to hear Tannhäuser. Unlike all the other good Americans, Mr. Clemens has no desire to go to Paris when he dies, for his predilection among nations, the Great Republic of course excluded, is for Germany.

"The only poet who can afford him any pleasure is Browning, whom he reads aloud with a rare understanding of the spirit of the verse. Roughly speaking, I may say that he reads anything in prose that is clean and healthy, yet he has never been able to find a line in Thackeray which interested him. Addison and Goldsmith are thrown away upon him; and Meredith, perhaps not unnaturally, provokes him to laughter."

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When George Moore Forgot to be Formal The story is told of George Moore, the author of Evelyn Innes, that when he was talking with the artist Manet concerning London customs he said: "You will see an extraordinary city. Until seven o'clock in the evening every one is in tweeds and has a pipe in his mouth, even in the street, but after seven o'clock—evening dress and a gardenia in the buttonhole."

Manet left for London without warning Moore. He reached Charing Cross at seven o'clock, drove to his hotel, put on his dress coat, and took a hansom to Moore's chambers. He found Moore in slippers and a jersey, eating sandwiches in company with three unshaven friends.

"Those who believe that Gascony is in the south of France are mistaken," Manet used to say. "It is on the banks of the Thames."

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The Bright Reply of Spain's Boy King Many Americans hold the opinion that the little King of Spain is not mentally sound. Some go so far as to declare that his pictures all show it. But the following episode shows that His Little Majesty is no dull or unintelligent boy:

One day during his history lesson the King asked his professor to tell him how Spain came to lose Chile, Mexico and the other Spanish-American colonies. So thrillingly and artistically was the story told that the Royal boy listened spellbound, and after it had ended sat absorbed in meditation.

At last he looked up to his professor and inquired, "What must I do to get back those countries for Spain?"

"The first and most important thing of all," replied the cautious and diplomatic pedagogue, "is that your Majesty should—should—grow up to be a man. When you are a man——"

"H'm!" muttered the lad, disenchanted, "when I'm a man I'll not be asking a history professor's advice about anything. I'll have my Prime Minister then."

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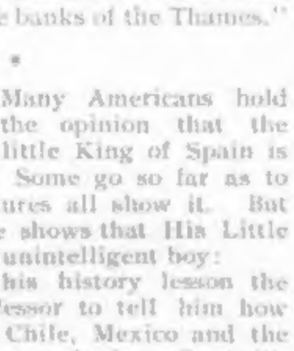
When Cavaignac's Name First Became Known M. Cavaignac, whom the recent disclosures in the Dreyfus affair have compelled to step out of the Ministry of War, was well on the way to the Presidential chair of France. He had won the admiration of the French crowd, so fond of glitter and show, by his unresponsiveness and his refusal to be guided by their clamor.



The man is far from inspiring, physically. He is tall, narrow-chested; his shoulders are bent. Although only forty-five years old, he is bald, with sharp features and a military mustache. He has the appearance of a dyspeptic.

In France a saying may make a man's fortune. Cavaignac's name came prominently before the people when he was but fifteen years old. He had won a prize for Greek at his school, and the Prince Imperial was to honor the occasion by distributing the rewards. "No," said the youthful Republican, "a Cavaignac cannot take a prize from a Bonaparte."

This incident made Cavaignac the most-talked-of young man in France, and a brilliant career was predicted for him.

Cavaignac, like Casimir-Perier and the Carnots, belongs to what is called the "Republican nobility." His grandfather voted for the death of Louis XVI. His father was noted as a Republican under the régime of Louis Philippe, and was the chief man in the brief Republic of 1848 to 1851.

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How Davis Appeared to the Soldiers While Richard Harding Davis has done the best he could to win new laurels for his classic brow as a war correspondent, still it must be admitted that the recent war brought out no really great correspondent, such as Charles A. Dana during the Civil War.

But, nevertheless, Davis sent interesting, though somewhat highly colored, accounts from the front. He was a pretty general favorite with the boys, one of whom thus described him in a letter which he sent to his home:

"Richard Harding Davis has been with us for some time. Was with us in the Sevilla fight. At one time the bullets were coming specially fast, and we couldn't tell exactly where they came from; presently the nervy author of Soldiers of Fortune sauntered up and asked Colonel Roosevelt why we were not shooting.

"On getting his reply, Mr. Davis coolly mounted a stump, took out his field glasses, and surveyed the country in front of him. After a minute's search, with Mausers whistling all about him, he located the Spaniards; then, grabbing a gun from a wounded man, he sat for several minutes on the stump, pumping lead at them as rapidly as he was able; his absolute coolness during this little affair was remarkable.

"Personally, he is a big, heavily built man, looks to be about thirty-something, goes clean shaven, and is a splendid type of affable-looking, robust, young manhood. He can fight, as well as write about fighting."

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An American Who Advises a King Americans who have followed the noteworthy public career of Clarence R. Greathouse will take much interest in the report that he has been dismissed from the service of the King of Korea on the demand of the Russian Minister. His offense was the recruiting of a strong bodyguard for the King from among the foreigners in Shanghai, because the King was afraid to trust his safety with his own people.

Mr. Greathouse is a native of Kentucky, a lawyer by profession, and about fifty-three years of age. For several years he was editor of the San Francisco Examiner, and during President Cleveland's first administration was the United States Consul-General in Tokio, Japan.

After the expiration of his official service in Japan he went to Korea, where he obtained the favor of the King, became head of the Post-Office Department, and during the last five years was, officially, the American Counselor to the Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs, and, practically, the confidential adviser of the King of Korea.

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The Latest Teacher of Simplicity Vladimir Tchertkoff, the exiled Russian nobleman, who is living with his wife and little boy in England, is the latest advocate of a life of absolute simplicity. Twenty years ago he was an officer in the Russian Imperial Guard, and a brilliant member of the Imperial Court. With the late Emperor he was on intimate terms, being a favorite companion of his leisure hours.

But the glamor of the Court never shut out from Tchertkoff's view the vision of the Russian poor, and he was a close student of the life of Christ. These two facts totally changed the life of the courtier; he became an Anarchist, yet—strange to say—an apostle of the doctrine of non-resistance. He resigned his position in the Army and severed his connection with the Court.

He then began to live a life of severe simplicity, translating into Russian the works of the world's great thinkers. They became popular at once, and 20,000,000 copies of these works were put into the hands of the peasants. His hostility to the Government became more pronounced, and he was finally driven out of Russia. The intensity of Mr. Tchertkoff is almost overpowering. He is extremely serious, and yet his audacity and originality make him delightful to listen to.

When a recent guest commented on his frugal vegetarian meal, he said: "As long as there are starving men in the world we hold that luxury is wrong. We try to have only what is really necessary for us."

•

When Madame Patti Made Her Début It is not generally known that the famous singer, Adelina Patti, who has just returned to the Roman Catholic faith, made her professional *début* in Cuba. At the time she was but fourteen years of age, and was still under the care of her father.

The family was poor, and placed its hopes on the remarkable voice of little Adelina. The opportunity to introduce her came at a concert of the Filarmonia of Cuba, and though the *débutante* was awkward, timid and inexperienced, her success was complete. Mdlle. Patti was deliriously applauded, and was promptly christened "the wonderful child" by the tuneful Cubans. And thus began the prima donna's brilliant career.

Patti, by the way, has just become a naturalized British subject. The great singer was born in Spain, of Italian parents, and was brought up by her stepfather in America. What the diva's real nationality was before she made herself an Englishwoman it would, indeed, be rather difficult to say.

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A Memory Extending Back to George III Few persons now alive can recall having paid a visit to George III and his Queen at Windsor Castle, yet an English lady who has just celebrated her ninety-fourth birthday distinctly remembers that great event in her life. When it is recalled that George III was the English monarch against whom the Revolutionary war was fought, and from whose rule the American colonies declared themselves free and independent, the wonder grows.

This remarkable old lady is one of the twelve children of Mr. Spencer Perceval, the English Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons by a Russian merchant. This tragic event occurred in 1812, but Miss Perceval has a vivid recollection of it. She is an aunt of Sir Horace Walpole and Sir Spencer Walpole.

•

The Sultan's Dread of Plots Against Him Recent developments in Crete have served to direct public attention again to the Sultan of Turkey, Abdul Hamid. This autocrat, it appears, still lives in fear of machinations against his life. One of the large firms of electrical engineers has been applying for an electrical concession in the Sultan's domains. Everything had been arranged and all formalities complied with, and only the Sultan's signature was required.

But Abdul Hamid is determined to keep control of things and not to be a mere figurehead. He read the document through, when suddenly his eye lighted upon the word "dynamo." This was quite enough. He immediately tore the paper up; for, though not properly acquainted with electrical machinery, he has learned that "dynamite" carries with it certain terrors.

Explanations were of no avail; the desired concession was not granted.

•

Li Hung Chang as a Dog Fancier Miss Selfridge tells, in The Outlook, the following very amusing anecdote of Li Hung Chang, who has been so many times deposed and restored to power.

When Count Li Hung Chang was in London, he placed a splendid wreath on the monument of General Gordon—"Chinese Gordon"—who had been his companion-in-arms years before.

A relative of Gordon was so deeply moved by this act that he sent to the Chinese statesman, with his compliments, a specially fine bull terrier, the winner of several prizes, and a remarkable specimen of canine birth and breeding. The following letter was received in acknowledgment:

"*My Dear Gordan:* While tendering my best thanks for sending me your dog, I beg to say that, as for myself, I have long since given up the practice of eating dog's flesh; but my attendants, to whom I handed the creature, tell me they never tasted anything so nice. Your devoted L."

•

The Man Who Handled Two Hundred Millions One of the busiest men in official circles during the recent war with Spain was Frank A. Vanderlip, the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. Upon him devolved the immense responsibility of personally supervising the $200,000,000 bond issue. The effective way in which every detail of that great undertaking has been handled is a testimony of the industry and ability of the Assistant Secretary, and merits more than passing notice.

Frank A. Vanderlip is still a young man. Only a few years ago he was a newspaper reporter in Chicago. Previous to that he had been an apprentice in a machine-shop, where, at odd moments, he picked up a knowledge of stenography, and then entered journalism. From reporter he rose to financial editor, where he attracted the attention of Lyman J. Gage, who held his ability so highly that he made Vanderlip his assistant when he himself became Secretary of the Treasury.

TOLD AROUND THE FIRE ON HALLOWE'EN

THE great logs in the fireplace had begun to burn fiercely, and as they crackled and threw out myriad sparks like miniature fireworks, the company drew their chairs up in a close circle in front of the fire.

Without, all was still; within, a hush had fallen over the company. The great old-fashioned clock in the corner gave its warning click, the wheeze of the wheels began, and it solemnly told off twelve.

When it had finished, no one spoke a word for a few moments. All were waiting expectantly for the Colonel's inevitable story.

* * *

A Night at the Haunted Hole

"It was just thirty years ago to-night," he began. "I was living down in Kentucky, before I moved to the North. The people about there were all superstitious, but, being 'Squire, I had to pooh-pooh such beliefs.

"Just outside the town was what was known for miles around as The Haunted Hole. Years ago a murder had been committed there. It was only the result of one of the many feuds which existed in that neighborhood. An unoffending old man was the victim, and, when found, his head was lying in the hole by the roadside.

"The villagers avoided the fatal spot after nightfall. They told all sorts of outrageous stories about it. The old women declared that it was haunted. Even the young people thought something was wrong about it. But all agreed that the hole in which the old man's head had rested could never be filled.

"But the worst of all was when old Deacon Carter came out and declared that he had filled it one night, only to find it, in the morning, empty—grinning at him, as it were.

"Now, old Deacon Carter was ordinarily reliable, except in a horse trade, but I determined to sift this thing to the bottom.

"So one afternoon I had a cartload of dirt, old stove-pipes, a leaky soap-kettle and stones emptied into the hole until it was filled. About eight o'clock that night I set out.

*

"Well, I looked all about, saw that the hole was filled, beat about the bushes on the roadside to see that none of the youngsters were playing any tricks on me, then I sat down and waited. Nothing occurred of any importance, except that the damp got into my bones, and I shivered a little; but that was from the cold. It got sort of lonesome sitting there; but about midnight I saw something which made me sorry I did not believe what the villagers told me, and let all experimenting with superstitions alone.

"I hadn't been looking directly at the hole, as I knew no one would disturb it, but all at once the material which had been dumped in it seemed to move as if it covered a living person who was trying to escape. Then it tossed and heaved like an angry sea. Suddenly the soap-kettle was hurled in the air, right at my head, then followed a volley of stove-pipes, stones and clods of earth. At this, I turned and lit out for home.

"Now, you may believe it or not, but the next morning, when they looked at the hole, it was absolutely empty."

"Well," replied the school-mistress, "there are certainly some very peculiar things that happen for which we can apparently find no cause. Last year, I had in one of my classes a boy whose father was an engineer. One night, when I was making some calls upon the parents of the children, he told me a very peculiar experience.

* * *

The Red Light at the Crossing

"'At the time of the great strike on the 'Q,' he said, 'I was out of work. I don't believe in doing 'scab' work, but when I looked at the pinched faces of my little children, it was a toss-up between honor and starvation, and I couldn't see them starve; so I took a place as engineer on the freight.

"'But one night something happened that made me a coward. It was about ten o'clock, and pitch dark. The headlight seemed to throw but the faintest light, which could not pierce that great vale of darkness ahead. We had a heavy train, and everything seemed to go smoothly, but I had a strange feeling that I never had before. Something awful seemed about to happen!

"'The first quarter of the trip went smoothly enough, and as soon as I reached signal-tower No. 54, which is about half a mile this side of a sharp curve, I whistled for the road-crossing just beyond the cut. It was storming frightfully, and now and then the lightning would show us the road ahead for a little distance.

"'As we turned the curve, a flash of lightning showed a man in a wagon in the middle of the track, madly lashing his horses, which refused to move.

"'I sprang from my seat, whistled down-brakes, reversed my engine, and gave her sand. Then I shut my eyes.

"'In an instant we struck them! And I could hear that sickening crunch beneath the wheels. A few rods beyond, the train was gradually stopped.

"'The men were out of the caboose in a minute, and were running back along the track, their lanterns appearing like fire-flies in the black night.

"'We did what we could for the poor fellow, and lifted him carefully into the caboose. I don't think he ever knew what killed him.

"'We finished the run a very glum crew. We felt personally responsible for his death.

*

"'The next night, on the return trip, as we came to this same crossing, I saw a red light. It was being waved frantically to and fro. Again I whistled for brakes, and gave her sand. As we approached that fatal crossing, I saw plainly on the track the same wagon, and in it the man we killed the night before.

"'My hair stood on end as he coolly swung the red light and signaled for us to stop. Then a cold chill crept all over me. My chest felt as though a great burden was on it; but it was only for a minute. In an instant, the vision, or whatever it was, vanished.

"'The next night the light appeared again at the crossing, but it seemed all too real to be a vision; yet why, I do not know, but I let her have more steam. I felt the train dragging—it was the phantom light again.

"'Not a night passed after that, while I was on the road, that I did not see that red light at the crossing. We stopped several times to try to find the cause of it, but we knew it was needless to search, and that red light preyed on my mind so that I lost my nerve and had to come East again.'"

When the school-teacher stopped, every one drew a long sigh of relief.

"The experience of that engineer," said the Doctor finally, "reminds me of a somewhat similar instance of which I know.

* * *

The Engineer's Last Run

"At about eleven o'clock one night, five years ago, I received a message to call at a house in a poorer section of the town. After some difficulty I found the place, and entered the sickroom. There on a bed lay an engineer. Around him were gathered several of his companions.

"At a glance I saw that the poor man's case was hopeless. He was already wildly delirious, and at times his ravings took a serious aspect. As the clock on the mantelpiece struck twelve—the scheduled time for his train to leave—he became restless.

"He arose in bed, and made a motion as if pulling a lever. 'Ah!' he cried, 'she starts as easily as ever; there goes the signal tower; now for the long bridge! Aha! how she spins; runs up the St. Joe like the wind. Twenty-two miles, one stop for water, one stop for railroad crossing, and thirty minutes gone. Good time.'

"Then he would be quiet as the grave for a moment. 'She's got the crossing; there she goes.' His watchers looked at one another—could he have power of second sight to watch the movements of the train?

"One of the men was sent to the dispatcher's office a few blocks away. The engineer called out a way station and said, 'Four minutes lost; why could she not do without water? Aha! watch her pound sand now. Isn't she a perfect beauty?'

"The man returned from the telegraph office, and whispered to his companions that their comrade was following the train exactly. And the strange thing about it all was that his engine, No. 223, had not been used since the engineer was taken sick, because the foreman of the roundhouse wished to gratify the whim of its sick engineer. The fact that he knew that the engine was running, and that he could so closely follow its movements, caused a feeling of awe to come over the boys, and I must confess that it seemed weird and unearthly even to me, who was accustomed to see all forms of delirium.

"Apparently the sick engineer was in a trance. The boys all crowded nearer. The family was called. Then he sat erect, looking wildly about him, and cried, 'Tiffin! Red light! Stop for orders!' (Here he held up his hand as if reading an order.) 'Train number second five, engine 223. Prepare to meet thy God!' Then he fell back dead.

"For a moment the boys sat speechless. One rushed to the dispatcher's office and cried, 'Stop second five at Republic.' There was a wait of breathless anxiety, then back from the wires came the answer, 'Second five is stopped. What for?' By this time the story was known in the dispatcher's office, and the answer was soon received at Republic: 'Had a terrible presentiment. Tell conductor to proceed cautiously to junctions.' Hardly had the answer gone when Attica called to 'Stop second five at Republic; first five wrecked a mile west of here. Engine off. Engineer killed!'

"And there the man who had saved scores of lives lay a corpse at home, surrounded by his sorrowing family."

"Well," said the girl from Boston, "they try to explain these cases of presentiment along natural lines, but there are cases such as that which you have just related from your own experience, Doctor, which seemingly defy explanation. I read of a somewhat similar case given by John Ruskin.

* * *

A Mother's Warning

"It seems that a Christian gentleman and widower, with several children, rented an old farmhouse in the country for the sake of his children's health. Before finally moving into it, he took the children with him to visit it and see how they liked it.

"While he was making final arrangements with the landlord the youngsters set off on a tour of inspection. They visited every room, dancing and shouting in their joy over every new discovery. When they had made a pretty thorough search of the house, they came to a door at the head of some dark stairs, and were rushing down them pell-mell, when about midway they suddenly stopped in speechless amazement.

"Standing at the bottom of the stairs, with outspread arms, waving them back and silently forbidding them to come forward, stood their mother. With a cry of terror they turned and fled back to their father. He listened with astonishment to their story, and instituted a search at once. Close at the foot of these narrow stairs he found a deep, uncovered well, into which, in their mad rush, the children would have fallen and perished, had they not been thus warned of the impending danger."

"Well," said the Doctor, "those presentiments often can be explained, but the case I related and the one Mr. Ruskin speaks of are apparently beyond explanation, and can only be attributed to Providence. They are certainly not mere coincidences."

* * *

The Terror of a Dream

"A friend of mine," said the artist, "once had an amusing encounter in a dream, although to him it was intensely real.

"He had a room opposite me at the time. One night I heard terrible cries, followed by piercing yells, coming from the room across the hall in which my friend was sleeping. Thinking surely a burglar must have entered and been discovered, and was trying to murder him, I ran to the rescue. I burst open the door, to find him sitting up in bed, sobbing and crying like a baby. I shook him vigorously. He partially awoke with the exclamation: 'Don't you go! It will get you, too. Get out quickly. It's dreadful.'

"'What under the sun is the matter?' I exclaimed.

"'I have been in such awful danger,' wailed the dazed dreamer.

"'Tell me what it is,' I said.

"The crying man looked around the room, wiped his eyes, gulped down a sob, and feebly said: 'I have had such an awful time. For three hours I have been chased around the room by a piece of brown paper.'

"Simple as it may seem, he was a nervous wreck for weeks after, and when we would laugh about it he failed to see the joke."

"I can thoroughly appreciate how he felt," said the college student, who had not spoken until now, "for I had a very disagreeable experience, and a far too realistic one, just three years ago at this time. Of course the boys now make light of it, but it was at that time too terribly real to me to be any occasion for mirth-making.

* * *

The Manuscript in the Vault

"It was the desire of every student of E—— Academy to wear the silver skull which designated the members of Tau Nu Alpha. The belief was common that the initiation rites were severe, but it was generally believed that the terrors of initiation were largely imaginary.

"Ten days after I had sent in my acceptance to join, I received this note:

> "'The high and mighty archon of the mystic T. N. A. demands that candidate number seven go to the Colton Vault in the Episcopal Cemetery, at the mystic hour of one thirteen, on Thursday night, October thirty-first, and enter the same.
>
> "'In the northeast corner, on the floor, rests a sacred manuscript, which candidate number seven will procure and return, not later than two thirty o'clock, to the Most Revered Brother who will meet him at that time at the cemetery's entrance.'

"This was written in red ink to simulate blood, and was covered with skulls and cross-bones. I took the matter somewhat as a joke, but determining not to show any fear, on the night appointed I set out.

"As I approached the cemetery the moon cast weird shadows in the ghostly light. The crosses seemed like gaunt ghosts waving their arms and beckoning me onward. When I reached the gate I hesitated for a moment. I must confess that the hour, and the fact that it was a graveyard, with all the uncanniness which such places have at night, rather unstrung my nerves, but I had gotten this far and would not retreat. I walked up the main avenue; the little gravel stones crunching under my feet sounded to my imagination like the muffled footsteps of ghastly columns following me. The waving boughs and flickering shadows cast by the trees all served to heighten the ghostly effect.

*

"Finally, I reached the Colton Vault. It was built like a miniature Greek temple. I went up the three low steps, expecting, of course, to find the door closed and barred. I pulled on it, and to my horror it opened. With the very courage of fear, I went in. If the document was here I was determined to get it. I made straight for the northeast corner, my hands out before me at about the height of my head.

"Suddenly I stood paralyzed with fear. My hand had struck human hair! Scarcely knowing what I did, I felt lower. My hand struck a cold, clammy face. I followed on down the figure of a man, and there at his feet rested the manuscript.

"With a convulsion of fear, I grasped it and turned to flee in horror, but the door of the vault had swung to, leaving me in utter darkness. I made my way as best I could in the direction I thought it to be, and, suddenly stumbling, I fell on my face across a coffin. When I revived I was back in my room again, and around me were gathered a dozen men with scared faces.

"It was fully two weeks before I was myself again, when I learned that they had placed a dummy in the corner of the vault, not thinking that I would have the courage to go as far as I did, but determining that if I really went to find the manuscript I should not be disappointed. On the figure was a wig, and for a face it wore a mask which, in my nervousness, I mistook for human flesh.

*

"They had grown anxious at my delay, and had hunted me up and found me in a dead faint across the coffin. I declared to them that my experience had earned my freedom from secrecy of that initiation.

"Ugh! I can feel the awful dampness of that face even now."

For an instant a shudder ran around the room. Suddenly the door creaked, and a blast of cold air swept across the room. With that the Colonel, who had been nodding in the corner, awoke suddenly. The handkerchief had fallen from his bald head, and he roared out lustily: "Shut that door! Do you want me to catch my death of cold?"

The door was closed, and the story-telling was done for the evening.

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

Adventures of Captain Kettle, by Cutcliffe Hyne.—On shore a chapel-going, psalm-singing, incorruptible little saint; at sea a bullying, man-driving, unscrupulous little scamp—that is Captain Kettle, who remembers that he is a poor man, with a wife and children to support, even when the richest and prettiest woman in Chili begs him to forget it, and who sighs off the excitement of a free fight with his crew in sonnets where kisses rhymes with blisses, and fireflies gleam o'er meadows green.

Hard-up he begins in the first chapter, and hard-up he finishes in the last. Never did such a demon of ill-luck pursue a man through a book; never did such a series of promising ventures turn out so unprofitably. Of course, it was the Captain's ambition to retire from the sea and settle down on a little hen farm, far from salt water. When he engineers that surprising revolution for Donna Clotilde, who aspires to be the first woman President in history; when he runs across a great German liner, lying helpless in the path of the tornado; when he goes pearl poaching; when he finds and floats the stranded and abandoned steamer Duncansby Head, we feel certain that his ambition is about to be gratified; but then, we reckon without the Captain's luck, and that is certainly atrocious.

Yet, despite a certain natural disappointment that he is not suitably rewarded in the last chapter for his highly successful attempt to entertain us through an evening, we are glad that Mr. Hyne has kept him poor; for Captain Kettle is a character whom we should be extremely sorry to see retired from the high seas.

Another volume of his adventures, and then, perhaps, we shall be content to have him sent to that place where all good heroes go. But first we would have Mr. Hyne sure that he has said the last word of him, and not, from author, drop to medium. For materializations in fiction are always unconvincing, and we would not have Captain Kettle come back, a thin, pale shadow of his sturdy self, to walk beside the unlaid ghosts of Sherlock Holmes and Jack Hamlin. (The Doubleday & McClure Co., New York.)

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Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow, by Jerome K. Jerome.—Second thoughts are best—sometimes: in Mr. Jerome's case, seldom. His idle fellow is still clever, still amusing, but he is not quite so entertaining as he was in those days of first acquaintance.

Mr. Jerome was quick to appreciate the value of the word idle as a trade-mark for his wares, suggesting, as it does, a literary soothing syrup which is easy and pleasant to take, and he has made the most of it. As a purveyor of summer philosophy he has no equal; but he should stick to that. When he tries the serious, he becomes grand and gloomy, and, as a natural consequence—peculiar, and his fine writing is very fine indeed.

But one can skip those spots and enjoy Second Thoughts. Their author is always good when he gets to talking on cats or dogs or children. He has a bright little niece, who, just as the late Mr. Travers fathered all the current stories of stuttering cleverness, accepts the responsibility for Mr. Jerome's children stories.

It is of her that he is writing when he says:

"There are times when I doubt if children are as simple as they look. If it be sheer stupidity that prompts them to make remarks of this character, one should pity them, and seek to improve them. But if it be not stupidity? Well, then, one should seek to improve them by a different method.

"Last Tuesday evening, Dorothea was unhappy. Myself, I think that rhubarb should never be eaten before April, and then never with lemonade. Her mother read her a homily upon the subject of pain. It was impressed upon her that we must be patient, that we must put up with trouble that God sends us. Dorothea would descend to details, as children will.

"'Must we put up with cod-liver oil that God sends us?'

"'Yes, decidedly.'

"'And put up with the nurses that God sends us?'

"'Certainly; and be thankful that you've got them; some little girls haven't any nurse. And don't talk so much.'

"On Friday I found the mother in tears.

"'What's the matter?' I asked.

"'Oh, nothing,' was the answer; 'only baby. She's such a strange child. I can't make her out at all.'

"'What has she been up to now?'

"'Oh, she will argue, you know.'

"'She has that failing. I don't know where she gets it, but she's got it. Well?'

"'Well, she made me cross; and, to punish her, I told her she shouldn't take her dolls' carriage out with her.'

"'Yes?'

"'Well, she didn't say anything then, but so soon as I was outside the door, I heard her talking to herself—you know her way?'

"'Yes?'

"'She said——'

"'Yes, she said——?'

"'I must be patient. I must put up with the mother God has sent me.'"

"She lunches downstairs on Sundays. We have her with us once a week to give her the opportunity of studying manners and behavior. Milson had dropped in, and we were discussing politics. I was interested, and, pushing my plate aside, leaned forward with my elbows on the table. Dorothea has a habit of talking to herself in a high-pitched whisper capable of being heard above an Adelphi love scene. I heard her say:

"'I must sit up straight. I mustn't sprawl with my elbows on the table. It is only common, vulgar people who behave that way.'

"I looked across at her; she was sitting most correctly, and appeared to be contemplating something a thousand miles away. We had all of us been lounging! We sat up stiffly, and conversation flagged.

"Of course we made a joke of it after the child was gone. But somehow it didn't seem to be our joke.

"I wish I could recollect my childhood. I should so like to know if children are as stupid as they can look." (Published by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.)

Through Armenia on Horseback, by George H. Hepworth.—So rapidly have events moved during the past six months, so engrossed have we been with the wrongs of a people nearer home, that it seems impossible that it is less than two years since we were all busy settling the Armenian question.

And so, though Doctor Hepworth's book has both individuality and freshness, it appears curiously belated, now that both the subject and the people have been talked to death. Nor will those persons who have long since decided that the Sultan is anti-Christ be inclined to give the author credit for that fair-mindedness and open-mindedness which is his due, when they learn that he was accompanied on his travels by a commissioner of the High Assassin. And though he undoubtedly approached his subject unbiased, it would, perhaps, be strange if the fact that he was under Turkish influences had not affected his conclusion.

This conclusion is, that the root of the difficulty is political, rather than religious; that the Armenians are as low in many respects as either the Turks or the Kurds; that the Koran has not depressed the Turk, nor has Christianity elevated the Armenian; and that the massacres were caused by Armenian revolutionists, or, more strictly speaking, that the presence of the revolutionists gave the excuse for the massacres—an excuse, though, for which the Turks were undoubtedly looking. Doctor Hepworth is afraid that this conclusion will not please those readers who have placed the Armenian on a pedestal of modern martyrdom, and he is probably right.

But whatever one's view on the question may be, he will find much to interest and entertain him in the narrative of this trip which Doctor Hepworth took for the New York Herald. (E. P. Dutton & Co., New York.)

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BOOKS Just From The Press

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Women and Economics: Charlotte Perkins Stetson: Small, Maynard & Co.; Cloth..... 1 50
Works of Artemus Ward: Biographical Sketch by Melville D. Landon: G. W. Dillingham & Co.....

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Women and Economics, by Charlotte Perkins Stetson.—Time was, when men and women were on very nearly the same level. The man, to be sure, was the stronger, and, by superiority over his fellows, won the favor of the woman. Otherwise, their conditions of life were much the same.

"They were strong, fierce, lively beasts," Mrs. Stetson continues, "and she was as nimble as he."

But, after a time, all this was changed. Woman became, to a certain extent, enslaved; she was no longer free to go and come at will. With the new power of her master, came responsibility as well; having deprived her of the opportunity to get her own food and clothing, he was obliged to provide it for her. The woman earned all she received, but the fact that it came from another made her economically dependent.

Centuries of this economic dependence have resulted in the specialization of her life and functions, and in making her something more and something less than the normal female of the human species. That, in a few words, is the position taken by the author.

It is against this over-sexed condition of women that Mrs. Stetson complains so bitterly. She attacks the prevailing idea that "marriage is a partnership." The woman gives her services, and receives, in return, economic goods; but she is not her husband's partner unless she shares with him the work by which he actually earns his living. Similarly, the horse is an economic factor in society; but he is not economically independent, and he is not his owner's partner. This is a fair illustration of Mrs. Stetson's not always flawless logic.

Throughout, she considers both men and women as animals, subject to the same racial changes, and amenable to the same laws, as other animals. Mrs. Stetson is sincere, but her wit and originality contribute much toward the excellence of her book. One has but to regret that the means she suggests for bettering the economic condition of women are less novel than some of the points she raises in her earlier chapters.

Whether her medium be prose or verse, Mrs. Stetson impresses one as a writer who has something to say—something that she has thought for herself. Her poems, collected under the title, In This Our World, are simply rhymed prose—that is to say, they are poetical in form, not in idea.

Mrs. Stetson has simply taken advantage of the fact that homely ideas put into rhyme may give more pleasure and seem less crude and bald than if expressed with equal terseness, but without rhythm and jingle. The stove and the wash-tub, labor and capital, all engage the attention of her muse.

One of the most prominent characteristics of Mrs. Stetson's verse is the ever-recurring reference to the great fundamental laws of Nature and social economy. These are her favorite themes, and she treats them with the enthusiasm of the firm believer and the ardent student. (Small, Maynard & Co., Boston.)

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